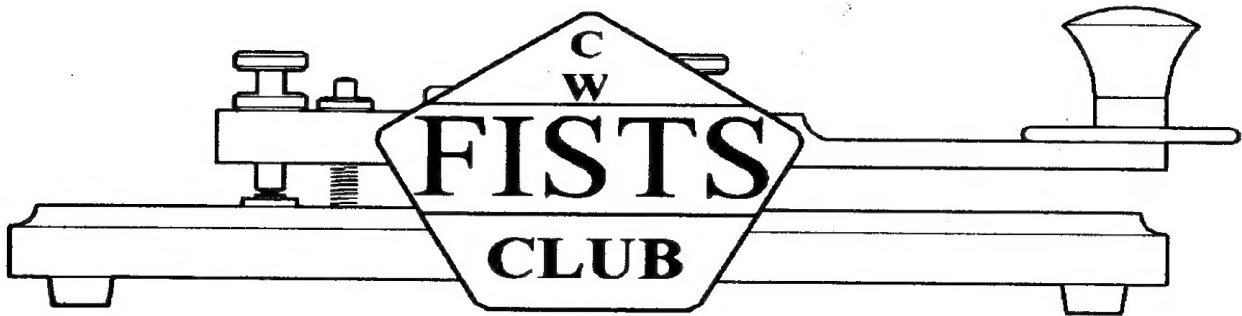


# The Keynote

Newsletter of FISTS CW Club, the active chapter of the  
International Morse Preservation Society

"Accuracy Transcends Speed"



- Further the use of CW
- Encourage newcomers to use CW
- Engender friendships among members

"When You've Worked A FISTS , You've Worked A Friend"

## HOW DO I...

**...ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES?** Irene WO8E 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066 has gold logo stickers, 200 for \$5; Blue enamel/gold metal clasp-back logo pins \$3.50; Cloth logo patches 3" octagon shaped \$1.50 Rubber stamps with the FISTS logo for use with an ink pad (not included) for \$5. "I Support KNOW Code" buttons for .75 Cobalt blue w/gold FISTS logo coffee mugs are available for \$7.50. Please make checks out to FISTS. These prices DO include first class postage.

**...GET AN UP-TO-DATE MEMBERLIST?** The list is printed in the KeyNote twice a year and is also on the Web page. A printed updated list may be obtained by sending \$1 (to defray costs- it's 10 pages long) to Ed N7CFA 2628 Lilac Street, Longview WA 98632.

**...GET ON THE FISTS ON-LINE Email LIST?** Send your Email address with your name/call/ FISTS number to [blafont@tir.com](mailto:blafont@tir.com)

**...GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO?** Stan K4UK, with the assistance of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club handles FISTS QSL bureau. Sort your outgoing FISTS cards by call area, then alphabetically and mail to K4UK, 1020 Long Island Dr, Moneta VA 24121. To receive cards you may have waiting at the bureau, send K4UK a few SASEs to have on hand. QSLs will NOT be sent to you unless you have sent in an SASE or made arrangements with Stan. His Email is [stanreas@rev.net](mailto:stanreas@rev.net)

**...RENEW MY KEYNOTE SUBSCRIPTION?** Send a check/money order made out to FISTS for \$15/year to Nancy WZ8C POBox 47 Hadley MI 4844 **What's the Family Plan?** All CW folks at the same QTH can belong to FISTS for one subscription fee of \$15. You will each have your own FISTS number, but only one Keynote will be mailed per address.

**...SPONSOR A DX FISTS?** DX FISTS have a separate block of numbers; their Keynote is mailed from Geo G3ZQS. Send their info to Geo 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs, BB3 2LZ; he'll send them a DX application.

**...HAVE AN APPLICATION OR NEWSLETTER SAMPLE SENT TO FRIENDS?** Send their address Joe K5HLR 29 Melrose Dr, Marrero LA, 70072. Please enclose \$1 if sample Keynote is requested. An application is also available, in text format, for downloading on our Web page <http://www.FISTS.org>

**...APPLY FOR THE CENTURY or WAS AWARD?** Send a list of contacts (call, FISTS #, qth, date, band) and power used to Lee N9NVV 4530 N 15th Street Terre Haute IN 47805 Don't submit QSLs. There is no charge to FISTS members for the regular Century Award. If you are applying for the Golden Century, send your request to HQ in England (119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs England BB3 2LZ) including sufficient return postage.

**...VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY?** Ed WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Reading PA 19606

**...SHARE COMPUTER SOFTWARE?** Joe WZ8U 5428 Bolander Grand Blanc MI 48439

**...GET MY PHOTO ON THE PHOTOPAGES?** Send a snapshot of yourself to Ken W8ROG 25206 Hayes Roseville MI 48066.

**...GET A COPY OF FISTS PRESENTATION** to give at my local club meeting? Contact Randy K8EZ, 2674 Gemini Dr, Lk Orion MI 48360 email - [k8ez@concentric.net](mailto:k8ez@concentric.net)

**...FIND THE WEB PAGE?** <http://www.FISTS.org>

**...SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE?** Contact Bill KK4KF at [bjmyers@arc.net](mailto:bjmyers@arc.net)

**...ORDER FISTS CLUB QSL CARDS?** send SASE to WX9X at 354 West St, Valparaiso IN 46383

**...ORDER A FISTS CLUB ID BADGE?** Our club badge is dark blue, with FISTS logo in gold and your name, FISTS number, callsign and "Int'l Morse Preservation Society" in white. They are \$6.95 post-paid from The Signman of Baton Rouge 879 Castle Kirk Dr, Baton Rouge LA 70808; email [nv5a@aol.com](mailto:nv5a@aol.com)

**...IMPROVE MY CODE SPEED and MEET LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS?** Join FISTS! Get involved in the nets and activities!

.....  
The Keynote is published monthly by Nancy Kott WZ8C Post Office Box 47

Hadley MI 48440-0047 Email: [nancy@tir.com](mailto:nancy@tir.com)

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# NORTH KEYNOTE AMERICAN

Slow Traffic Net: Tuesday & Thursday 9pm EDT on 3.682

Slow Ragchewing Group: W8BI 8pm EDT Wed on 3.720

Century Award Net: Sunday 2000Z on 14.058MHz

Saturday QSO Groups: 14.058 at 2000Z and 7.058 at 2300Z

**Please keep watch on the Novice Bands and frequencies ending in .x58 (.058, .158, .258 etc)  
Accuracy Transcends Speed Courtesy At All Times**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY FISTS!** September marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of FISTS in England by Geo G3ZQS.

I hope everyone had a good time on the FISTS Special Event weekend! From the unofficial results, Brian W8BL made the most contacts, about 150 or so. The average number seemed to be about 20. I heard a lot of FISTS on the air that weekend, it was great! I tried to get on the air, but only made about five contacts - my Kenwood 440 decided to blow up and started acting up. It was drifting all over the place, then the signal started getting chirpy and unstable. I pulled the plug on it and replaced it with my Emtech NW40, but 40 meters was pretty bad, so I only got in a couple QRP contacts. I hope to have everything figured and get back on the air in time for the Sprint!

Instead of certificates, I ordered commemorative QSL cards. I don't have them in my hot little hands, but they should be beautiful. WX9X gave us a great price on them, and being a typical YL, I couldn't resist an bargain. So, I ended up over-buying. We made them as generic as possible, so they could be used until the end of the "anniversary" year. Across the top, it says "1997 - 10th Anniversary", then "International Morse Preservation Society" and a graphic of our FISTS logo-key (like on the cover of the Keynote). Then there is a block for you to either fill in your callsign and name, or use a computer generated label. They are red, white and blue on glossy paper. Let me know how many you need to do your QSL's for the Special Event. If you would like some to use for QSL's for your own QSLing, send me a couple bucks to cover the postage and quantity desired and I'll send them out while quantities last. There is an info paragraph about FISTS on the back of the card.

Next on the agenda is the FALL SPRINT. World Radio has the date wrong - QST has it correct. It is SATURDAY OCTOBER 11, 1700Z-2100Z. Details are inside this Keynote.

The other big thing I want to mention is that many ARRL Districts are having elections for Section Managers, Vice Directors, Directors and other Representatives this time of year. PLEASE take a moment to fill out your ballot!! These representatives are going

to be the ones influencing the ARRL position in the upcoming WARC-99, so it is imperative that we get people elected who will represent ham radio, not the commercial interests! When you get your ballot from the ARRL, please fill it out and return it before it gets misplaced or forgotten. Every vote, specially a vote for pro-CW representatives, is extremely important. I can't stress this enough.

It's been a great 10 years for FISTS! I'm looking forward to another 10...and 10 after that....let's vote in Representatives who will assure that REAL Ham radio will be around for future generations

## USS PAMPANITO Submarine NJ6VT

NJ6VT is the call sign for the club station on the USS Pampanito submarine, and is FISTS #3077. The Pampanito is tied up to pier 45 at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco, California. The sub is on display to the public seven days a week, courtesy of the National Maritime Museum Association. Amateur radio operations are conducted from the cramped spaces of the sub's radio room. (And I do mean CRAMPED!)

NJ6VT is somewhat of a strange amateur radio call sign, but it is very significant to the USS Pampanito. During W.W.II the USS Pampanito's radio call sign was NJVT. Now you can appreciate the significance of NJ6VT. The club is very proud to put this call sign back on the air waves.

There are thirteen members in the Pampanito Amateur Radio Club. NJ6VT station is operated by various club members throughout the week. I usually operate every Wednesday and Sunday between the hours of 1600 UTC and 2100 UTC. Part of my operating time is spent on CW, (14.058 +/- or 7.144), and part on SSB, (14.245 + QRM or 18.137).

We do send out QSL cards, and a nice brochure that tells about the USS Pampanito submarine. I look forward to working many FISTS club members from NJ6VT. NJ6VT is a 3 point club station.

If you would like to make a special sked with NJ6VT please let me know at e-mail [k6df@wco.com](mailto:k6df@wco.com). Photos of the sub and radio room are available on the web site at; <http://www.wco.com/~k6df>  
Dennis Franklin K6DF FISTS #3076 Fremont, CA

# Welcome to the New FISTS

Thomas	Sierra Madre	CA	W6QHL	3603
Spider	Pinole	CA	W6DOB	3604
Bob	Crete	IL	W1ZZL	3605
Louis	Houston	TX	KD5GM	3606
Don	Campbell	CA	W0BXS	3607
Ed	Fort Belvoir	VA	KG2MD	3608
Jack	Alliance	OH	W8WEN	3609
Mac	Joplin	MO	W9NLA	3610
Bill	Houston	TX	K5ZTY	3611
Jeff	Kirkland	WA	KK7IK	3612
Roy	Fremont	IN	WW6Q	3613
Chuck	Hopewell Junction	NY	KF2WX	3614
Luther	Montclair	NJ	KA2RLN	3615
Bill	Dallas	TX	N5GQ	3616
Ralph	Yuma	AZ	W7DIB	3617
Rick	Finley	IN	KF4OCJ	3618
Rick	Sebring	FL	N9CLK	3619
Jerry	Belton	MO	W0CL	3620
Lou	Jupiter	FL	K4ZRP	3621
Arthur	Gainesville	FL	W4TVQ	3622
Charles	Lecanto	FL	WB4BNI	3623
John	Livingston	NJ	KC2CFZ	3624
Bob	N Huntington	PA	N3YCN	3625
Norris	Estes Park	CO	W6ETK	3626
Dick	Covina	CA	W6SGJ	3627
Larry	Costa Mesa	CA	K6VDP	3628
Richard	Clinton Twp	MI	K8RJA	3629
Joseph	Cutchogue	NY	W2LOB	3630
Glen	El Cajon	CA	W6STU	3631
Evan	Culpeper	VA	KE4BWD	3632
Rick	Neponset	IL	KF9HC	3633
Chuck	St. Cloud	FL	K3PBY	3634
Jose	Coatepec	VER	XE7UXL	3635
Brian	Rixeyville	VA	KE4IAR	3636
Lee	Laurel	MS	KB5IXI	3637
John	Bethel	ME	W3FSA	3638
Perry	West Covina	CA	AC6UJ	3639
Jonathan			KZ5Z/VK1KZ	3640
John	Arlington	KS	K9HBY	3641
Mary	Rixeyville	VA	KE4TBN	3642
Ray	Bel Air	MD	N3YQE	3643
Frank	Clinton Twp	MI	K8JN	3644
Larry	Nashua	NH	K1CWZ	3645
Billy	San Antonio	TX	N5XPZ	3646
John	Coppell	TX	KC5AN	3647
Casey	Hillsboro	OR	KS7J	3648
Evan	Lawrence	KS	N0BI	3649
Luther	Circleville	OH	KB8ZMI	3650
Donnal	Hastings MN	MN	KF0UU	3651
Bob	Santa Barbara	CA	KE6WYA	3652
Doug	Minneapolis	MN	N0HQN	3653
James	Kalamazoo	MI	K8WPI	3654
Ronald	Grand Rapids	MI	AA8MW	3655
Dan	Vista	CA	KS6Z	3656
William	Wilmington	NC	N2WG	3657
Edwin	LaSalle	MI	AA8RU	3658
James	Overland Park	KS	KB0MZF	3659

Richar	Norma	OK	N5XRD	3660
Seymour	Seaford	NY	KA2LAE	3661
Clayton	Wellford	SC	KD4NNU	3662
John	West Redding	CT	N3GJM	3663
Bill	Regina	SASK	VE5HQ	3664
Larry	Williamswood	NS	VE1LX	3665
JJ	San Jose	CA	KF6AIA	3666
Raymond	Salem	OR	W7SJS	3667
Dan	Sweet Home	OR	KK7BR	3668
Mike	Broomfield	CO	KB0ZTN	3669
John	Pico Rivera	CA	AC6GW	3670
Thurman	Lyles	TN	N4KN	3671
Sandra	Lyles	TN	KE4YBS	3672
Rob	Rutherfordton	NC	W4CW	3673
Gary	Bellflower	CA	KF6HGE	3674
Dale	Livingston	TX	KB8NHI	3675
Tom	Gainesville	FL	N4QFL	3676
John	Walnut	IL	KA9DVX	3677
David	Sterlings Hts	MI	W8VB	3678
Stanley	Warren	MI	KB8WFX	3679
Scott	Sterling Hts	MI	KG8IE	3680
William	Clinton Twp	MI	N8SA	3681
Jewel	Chicago	IL	AA9MR	3682
JR	Robbins	TN	WA4WMN	3683
John	Macedon	NY	WA2NZO	3684
Dave	Conowingo	MD	KA3YNV	3685
John	Longmont	CO	WB0YRM	3686
Mike	Phoenix	AZ	W9UQB	3687
Rupert	Bethesda	MD	WB4ZOF	3688
Richar	Plainfield	IN	KB9GRN	3689
Bob	Port Chester	NY	N2OTG	3690
Frank	Biloxi	MS	WA5GDF	3691
Chuck	Derby	KS	W0LTH	3692
Scott	So Berwick	ME	N1XIJ	3694
David	Tennessee	IL	N9SZM	3693
Ted	Edison	NJ	W2TC	3695
Annett	Seal Rock	OR	N7SG	3696
Max	Bristol	NH	WX1B	3697
Richard	Denver	CO	AB0CD	3698
Gary	St Cloud	FL	KF4HEE	3699

# 3700-3799 are reserved for DX. NA continues with 3800.

Joseph,	Norton, OH,	AB8AV,	3800
Mark,	Taunton,MA,	WB2EAG	3801
George	Russellville,AR	W5PV	3802
Larry,	Eldersburg,MD,	W3MNE,	3803
John	Rock Island,IL	KC5ZQX	3804
Chuck	Spring Valley,WI	KG9CT	3805
Tom	Orlando,FL	WA8D	3806
Gerald	Sioux City,IA	WB0T	3807
Ken	Norco,CA	N6KND	3808
Wilson	Collinsville,OH	N8WD	3809
Victor	Russell,KS	KB0WGX	3810
Wilson	Collinsville,OH	W8WD	3811
Bob	Sacramento,CA	WB6CYY	3812
Cliff,	Smithtown,NY,	N2AKZ	3813
Charlie,	Nashville,TN,	WA4MBV,	3814
Jerry	Coeur D' Alene,ID,	W7KR	3815
Pat,	Altoona,PA,	KA3THS	3816
Marilyn,	Altoona,PA,	WZ3M	3817

Carl	Greer, SC,	KE4FWA	3818
Vern	Ajo, AZ,	KC7QGE	3819
Jim	Gretna, LA,	W4DDD	3820
Kathy	Troy, MI,	KB8VMZ	3821
Craig	Durand, MI,	KC8GGU	3822
Mert	St Paul, MN,	W0UFO	3823
RJ	Palmer, MA,	KH6RF	3824
Dave	Camp Hill, PA,	W8IJ	3825
Bob	Pasco, WA	KC7CRR	3826
Jim	Toronto, ONT,	WA3JPM	3827
Pat	Pearblossom, CA	KF1S	3828
Patrick	Bellevue, WA,	W0OPW	3829
Kevin	Hamilton, OH,	W8KJ	3830
Mike	Tulsa, OK,	KB5UUR	3831
Tom	Troy, MI,	WC9F	3832
John	Plainsboro, NJ	NU3E	3833
Gary	Lovettsville, VA	,NC4S	3834
Leon	Hamburg, PA,	KG3U	3835
Ray	Sussex, NJ,	WA2SEI	3836
Jeffrey	Rockford, IL,	N9ZUT	3837
George	Middleburg Hts, OH,	KC8VQ	3838
Richard	Jackson, MS	KK5IN	3839
Mike	Panama Cty, FL,	KB4KKL	3840
Marty	Lakewood, NJ	KG2JB	3841
Randy	Okemos, MI	K8ZAA	3842
Paul	Scobey, MT	N0PL	3843
Frank	Tulsa, OK	N5MMB	3844
Bob	Bradley, CA	KE6YSW	3845
Garry	Pittsfield, MA	WA1GWH	3846
Linda	Burlington, VT	KB1MBO	3847
Mike	Garland, TX	W5VCZ	3848
Homer	Seattle, WA	W7NWP	3849
Bill	Roseville, CA	KZ5CO	3850
George	Bangor, PA	AA3JU	3851
Doug	Livingston, MT	K7YD	3852
John	Commerce, MI	K8JD	3853
Hal	Huntsville, TN	N4XNR	3854
Bob	Toms River, NJ	W2JSF	3855
Robert	Northbrook, IL	KO9R	3856
Stacey	Whitetail, MT	AA7YA	3857
Randy	Whitetail, MT	K7PGL	3858
Fred	St Louis, MO	N0JFZ	3859
Charles	Biloxi, MS	W5ODR	3860
Herb	Cary, NC	N4UE	3861
Joe	Blountsville, AL	WA4LXP	3862

This month's sponsors: K4PTU; NY2V; AC5JH; N3VVE; K8JV; N4ZMP; N8TW; KT4YY; N4ZMP; KE3NV; AF9H; K5HLR; KA1RVV; K3DC; N4ZMP; K7VZ; W4HZD; KG2LL; N8TW; W0AP; K5HLR; N3PM; NY2V; W9LUY; KC5VJU; W4IUI; AA8YY; KC4UBC; K2SB; AD6AG; W4IRE; WA3PTY; AA0YY; W4OA; W6DDB; W4MA; KB3AWR; K5HLR; N8TI; W7BWI; K2GVC; KG8DA; N8TI; KD4GTM; AA9LS; AD4UI; KC7QOP; W4OA; W3FSA; WA3WEE; K5HLR; W9LUY; N9TRK; WA5UFH; KC8GCD; W6DDB; KB3AWR; K6DF; W4OA; WD8OCV; N44ZMP; W4JTU; N4ZMP; W4NPL; KT4YY; K2SB; KB7PIM; KT4YY; K4UK; N9TRK; WA6SBB; K8OUA; N7HOK; WA3PTY; K2SB.

## Photopage Winner!

*The September photopage winner is...drumroll, please...Mike N3PUR, #3131.* Mike wins FISTS logo stickers and a cloth patch just for sending in his photo for the photopages! You may be a lucky winner next month in our computer generated drawing. Send in a snapshot where your face is about the size of a quarter to Ken W8ROG, 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066. We'll put it on the photopages, and also make you a star by putting it on our Web page! The photobook is going to be reprinted when we get to page 14, so the new FISTS who don't have their copy, be assured you will be brought up to speed when it's reprinted. But, we can't fill up page 14 until we get 36 pictures, so PLEASE send yours in.

## Upgrades and callchanges

### *Congratulations to:*

Bob KB9LFR on upgrading to Advanced class!

John KG9HV on upgrading to Extra class!

Gary KC5PPO on making Advanced class!

Matt KF4LUG is now Extra class AF4FE

Mike KF4LSG is now Extra class AF4FF

Jerry KG9JD is now Extra class N9TU

"PhoneLess in America Morse ARC", FISTS #3500

is now N8CWG, which stands for CW Group

Chris KE6UQK is now W6VL

Bill AA5TN is now K5VO

Tom KF5IE is now AE5I

Gerald WA0UCQ is now W0GV

## Corrections

Ed #3490 was incorrectly listed in the New FISTS list. His correct callsign is K1GDH

## An Alternative Style Badge

W2BE Grafix, Bruce W2BE, has made a name badge for those of you who are tired of the same old look of the engraved plastic style. These are yellow, have the FISTS logo in blue with FISTS in red and CW Club in black letters. You may have your FISTS number on them in addition to the usual info. They are printed and laminated with a clear plastic, rather than engraved. It's hard to describe but they are very nice looking. I believe the cost is \$4 plus .75 shipping. Bruce's address is 204 East Lake Blvd, Medford NJ 08055. Phone, (609) 983-0106, Email - eichmann@waterw.com; home page <http://www.waterw.com/~eichmann>

Sorry about the condition of the list this month, folks! I am in a hurry to get this to the printer, what with the Special Event this month and all. Next month, I'll go back to typing the sponsors along with the new members name.

## FISTS QSL Bureau

When Brian W8BL took over our FISTS QSL Bureau after John N8FU became a Silent Key, it was a part-time task - we only had a thousand or so members. Sorting the cards and mailing them out only took a few hours a week. However, as FISTS is getting bigger and bigger, more and more cards are flooding into the bureau. The amount of time it was taking to maintain the Buro increased accordingly. Brian was processing between 300 and 500 cards a week. Clearly something had to be done -- Buro work was starting to interfere with Brian's on-air time!

We looked into different options, from having a central "clearinghouse" for cards, which would then be sorted into districts and forwarded to mini-buro across the states. This would divide the work load, but it costs postage money to forward the cards and would be hard to make self supporting without charging a fee. It would slow up the delivery of cards, because they would be going thru another set of hands. And, it would call for more volunteers, which can be in short supply.

Another option was to have mini-buros set up in different locations of the country, and have the individual FISTS members sort their cards and mail them directly to the proper QSL mini-buro. For example, one volunteer would handle the cards for districts 1 and 2, so you'd send your cards intended to the 1 or 2 districts to that mini-buro, your 3 and 4 district cards to another volunteer and so on. This would speed the card processing time, eliminate the extra cost of forwarding the cards, but it would be very inconvenient for the membership. You'd have to mail out separate packages of cards to each mini-buro, which translates into more postage for you to buy. Since the purpose of the buro is to save the membership postage money and be a convenience for the members, that wasn't good.

About this time, Stan K4UK offered his assistance. I pounced on his offer quicker than a duck on a June bug and asked him how he felt about QSL buros! He took the matter to his club, the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, and they voted that it would be a good club project. It should work out well because the cards will be mailed to one central place, but the actual sorting and mailing out of the cards will be divided among several people in one location.

The main difference will be that where Brian did not want SASEs, we now will require you to keep SASEs on file with Stan if you want your cards. We recommend keeping at least three #10 envelopes on file with your callsign in big letters in the top left corner.

With Brian's help, we made up this Frequently Asked Question list:

### *What is the FISTS QSL Bureau?*

FISTS QSL Bureau is a central clearinghouse to facilitate the exchange of QSL cards with other members of the FISTS CW Club. This service is available to active members of the FISTS CW Club only. Only cards from FISTS members that are for contacts with other FISTS are accepted.

### *What do I need to do in order to get my cards through the Fists QSL Bureau?*

The basic requirement to receive QSLs through the Fists QSL Bureau is to have at least one Self-Addressed-Stamped-Envelope with a unit of First class postage here at the bureau. First Class postage here in the US is presently 32 cents. Canadians, be advised, the First class rate to Canada is 45 cents.

### *What do I do with my cards for DX Fists members?*

QSL's are accepted for any valid Fists contact whether they be for contacts between NA members or DX members. We have a counterpart in the UK and we send QSLs back and forth at least once a month.

### *Is there anything I can do to get my QSLs from the Bureau faster?*

The single most IMPORTANT thing a member can do to expedite the returns on QSLs is to sort your QSLs before sending them to the Bureau. Sort them by call area (1, 2, 3 etc.) then alphabetically by suffix. Put the DX on the end. For example, KB2JAX, K2SB, NB2T, W8BL, WO8E, K8OUA, G3ZQS, DF4EO.

### *Where do I send my QSL's?*

Send all Fists QSL cards to:

Fists QSL Bureau c/o Stan Reas K4UK, 1020 Long Island Dr, Moneta VA 24121.

### *How can I be sure my cards will be delivered?*

Since we now require SASE's for delivery of cards, the best way is to ask during your QSO with a FISTS member "qsl via buro ok?" That way you both know that you will have SASEs on file to receive your cards. If you want to know if you have cards on file, or want to know the status of your envelopes, write Stan at the above address, or Email at [stanreas@rev.net](mailto:stanreas@rev.net)



## CW - A "LOVE-HATE" RELATIONSHIP

By John E. Gercken, AA9UF

In my 18 years as a ham, I have heard and read many debates over the pros and cons of CW. I got my ticket in May of 1979, and I remember when I was a Novice, how nervous I would get every time I got on the air. Sweaty palms, heart pounding, etc. I never got over that nervous feeling until 1994 when I decided to gear up for my Extra Class license. I *made myself* work as many CW stations as possible, and the more I worked, the easier it became, and the less nervous I got.

I used a unique method of using Bencher paddles. Since I did not know at the time that you needed to use an electronic keyer with a set of paddles. I wired the Bencher so that if you hit either paddle, it was like hitting a straight key. I would rock my wrist back and forth alternately for sending either dits or dahs. My code was as smooth as a keyer. Ops would ask what keyer I was using, and when I told them that I wasn't using one, it blew their minds!

I really hated CW because it always made me nervous sending it because I felt my fist was not really that good, and my copy was worse. I hated making mistakes. I hated CW also because copying it made me very sleepy, especially doing it at slow speeds. In order to work CW effectively, I had to take a nap *before* I got on the air so I would be wide awake and alert. For a long time I hovered at the 8 wpm level. When I upgraded to General in August of 1983, I stayed away from CW for a long time, until 1992 when I decided to give it another try. This time, it was different.. *really* different. Up until now, I had been using my left hand to send CW since I am left handed anyway. One day I sat down at my station and began to send out a CQ and found that it just did not feel right for some reason! I studied the situation a while, and decided to try using my *right* hand! I wired my vibroplex Iambic key for right-hand use, and have been using it that way ever since. What happened to make me change? To my amazement, my sending ability was *better* than it had been, and felt more natural! I am somewhat ambidextrous, however. I do a lot of things right handed as well, so that may have something to do with it.

After this amazing change, the CW bug bit hard, and I began to do CW almost exclusively. The only time I got active on voice was during contests. I now had the desire to upgrade toward my Extra Class license, because most of the rare DX stations were hanging out at the low end of 40 and 20 meters where I could not go. It was like an itch I could not scratch.

I was concentrating hard on the CW because I knew that would be the thing that would trip me up in the Extra exam. The theory was not a problem for me. For quite a while I hovered around the 13-15 wpm mark because it was comfortable for me. I found, however, that I could not write down the code at faster speeds than 15 wpm for very long at a time because my hand would cramp up. Using a typewriter was not much better. I knew that I had to come up with a better system of copying, so I tried copying most of it in my head and only wrote down the essential things such as the callsign, name, QTH and RST. I just let the rest roll through my head like watching RTTY text scrolling across the screen in my head. It was amazing how much more relaxed I felt copying in my head, and I certainly don't get sleepy at higher code speeds.

In preparation for my Extra Class test, I purchased the cassette tape course from Amateur Radio School by Jerry Zilliak, KB6MT. I began listening to his "ham words" tapes going up to 35 wpm, and to my amazement, my copy shot through the roof! When I went for my test last March, the test sounded slow! I passed with flying colors and missed only one question. I passed the theory in March of 1995, missing one question, and I had tried twice prior to last March to pass the code test thinking that I was *ready*, but I *froze* when they turned the tape on! When I found out that I had passed, I immediately went out to the car and called my wife Barb and then my brother Glenn, N0PNQ about it. I wasn't on cloud 9, though. I was on cloud 29!! I darn near cried!

Now, having "full privileges" I am thoroughly enjoying ham radio to its fullest within the constraints of my budget. Besides CW, I like to do some RTTY and PACTOR as well. I have also tried my hand at CW contesting, but I still have a way to go on that. I have the popular contesting program CT9, but I find that it is not "user friendly" enough for me to use. Oh well, something to work toward. The learning never stops once you get whatever license class you want. You only realize how much more there is to Ham Radio!

In writing this article, I had to stop and think about why I like CW so much. Several answers came to mind. One is that you can filter out QRM made by other stations and listen to only one signal. You don't have to put up with splatter from other high-powered stations. With a good all-mode filter or DSP filter, QRM can be 90% eliminated. I like my Daiwa all-mode active filter. Listening to different operators, you get a sense of the type of person they are. For example, an operator with an uneven, jittery fist may be a nervous type person (perhaps a Novice making one

of his first few contacts). An operator that sends slow and steady may be the type that does not get in a hurry about anything and is there to have fun. He may also be an old timer. Then there are those operators whose fists are next to impossible to copy because of lack of practice, or nobody has shown them the correct way to send CW. The most difficult sending style is that which runs the letters all together so that you can't tell one from another. Another common mistake is sending dits too close together or making the dits too short in duration. Some also make the dahs way too long and the dits way too short. Using an electronic keyer virtually eliminates these errors because the dits and dahs are self-completing. . . always perfect.

CW is not only a communications mode, but an art form because of its uniqueness. Back in the days of Thomas Edison, telegraph companies sprang up all over the country much like cellular phone companies today. The most proficient operators gained recognition and fame by being the best. Even competitions were held among them to see who was "top dog". CW was the first digital mode.. on/off keying.. ones and zeros. Another advantage of CW is that it is such a narrow bandwidth signal that it lets more operators occupy a given band of frequencies and not get in each other's way to any great degree.

On the lighter side, you can have some cookies and milk while "talking" on CW. Try doing that on voice!

I am sure some of you slower code operators have had your share of problems with getting other operators to QRS. Here are some suggestions. If the other operator responds to your CQ call by sending his call-sign faster than you would like, respond by sending the following: PSE QRS TO (?)WPM FOR GUD CPY DE your callsign) KN. if he still sends fast, then send the following: THAT WAS NOT QRS. PSE QRS TO (?)WPM. If he still insists on sending fast and you can't even copy 50% of it, then send the following: SRI OM NO CPY. NO QRS, NO QSO. 73 DE your callsign) SK. He will get the point. I have used these tactics, and they work

It is considered impolite, I believe, to send CW faster than you are able to copy or faster than the other operator is sending. After all, why waste time and energy in conducting a QSO if the operator you are sending to can't copy because you are too fast for him? I have used this rule of thumb for years, and I have had many operators express their appreciation that I would QRS for them. I try to keep in mind at all times that I was a beginner once, just like them.

73 de AA9UF John E. Gercken

## Ham Radio at it's Best

Dear Nancy,

Please don't use my name or call with this, the other guy deserves all the credit. I was heartened by the letter from Arnie, KT4ST, in Issue 8 of The Keynote, in which he recounted his experience working a very slow op, who appreciated Arnie's efforts. Maybe that op was the one I heard sending CQ in Feb of this year. I would peg his speed at about 3 wpm, painfully slow, enough to try the patience of Job. I kept listening to hear if there would, indeed, be another letter!

I hesitated -- did I want to get involved in a QSO with this person? Just name, RST, QTH, and the inevitable rig-watts-dipole exchange would take a half an hour! Wasn't there somebody around at my QRQ tear-'em-up speed of 15 wpm? Maybe I better tune around...wait! Bud, a K5 in Texas (I'm not giving his full call because I haven't asked his permission to quote his letter), answered, at 3 wpm! I listened long enough to get Bud's name and call and, while still in my own shame and embarrassment, and ADMIRATION FOR BUD, wrote him and told him, in essence, I'd heard him answering the slow op and that I thought he, Bud, was a real ham. Here's his reply:

"Thank you very much for the card and the very nice compliment. I think you're indeed a gentleman for taking the time and expense to recognize me and what I did. To tell you the truth, although he was quite slow, I enjoy helping others who are just starting because I have no trouble remembering my younger Novice days. Even though I was blessed that code came easy to me, I got on the air before I was really ready to copy that madness. I thought it sounded like a million piece orchestra and they all were playing in a different key. And there is little doubt that I was so nervous that I probably sounded like I was sending with my left foot. If it had not been for my younger brother I would have probably had a hard time for sometime on the air.

I have now been a Ham forty one years and I have loved every minute of it. I really like CW and operate there 90% of the time. I get on SSB to talk to a few friends and my brother every week but that is because they have all forgotten CW. Hi Hi

Without going on and on because I know you weren't looking for a pen pal, the best part of my being a Ham was when I was a Novice. I waited for the mailman and the QSL cards everyday. Too bad the cost prohibits most people from sending them anymore.

Again, many thanks, your note meant more to this old heart than you will ever know. I would look forward to working you some day."



## CQ CQ CQ FISTS FOR THE FALL SPRINT

by Sprint Manager, Tom AC5JH

Yes, its already time for the FALL SPRINT and I know a lot of Fists are eager to participate, especially those who got their feet wet on the last one and had a great time. I have participated in two Sprints and had a ball both times so, I too, am eager for the Fall Sprint to get here. If you have never taken the opportunity to get involved in a Sprint, this is as good a time as any to take the plunge.

Sprints offer opportunities for all levels of Fists operators. Their are some strong signal contesters who are very competitive, as well as tentative first timers. The great thing is that there is room for both in the Sprints and everyone can have a good time regardless of experience level. Once the basic information has been exchanged, its OK to enjoy some rag chew time if you desire. I try not to be in too big of a hurry, pass a little more information along and enjoy the opportunity to meet so many Fists in such a short time. This is also an opportunity to promote Fists with nonmembers who answer your CQ FISTS. Send Joe KK4HR or Nancy a large SASE and they'll send you a supply of brochures to include with your QSL cards.

The popularity of the Sprints means that the spectrum around the .058 calling frequencies can get real congested even though the whole General Class and Novice bands are our hunting ground. Spread out a little more than usual. Lets not forget the Novice bands. One night I made two new Fists QSO's in a row on 7.108 after someone suggested it as a good Novice Fists calling frequency in a recent KeyNote. Great idea, I make a pass by there every time I operate on 40 meters. If you are a Novice or Tech Plus Fists you could have some real fun around 7.108 with your own pile up to work. A contact with you is worth 10 points, twice that of Fists with a higher class. Even if your experience is limited, you will find that your fellow Fists will be very helpful, despite the contest going on, and make your efforts very rewarding and fun. Encouraging the beginner is one of our basic tenants, contest included.

Fists CW Club and what it stands for is the best thing that has happened to CW in years. Our growth rate is proof of that. The excellent operating example demonstrated be the Fists on the air is part of our success. With well over 3000 members we should be able to fill the bands with CQ Fists on Oct 11, 1997 from 1700UTC to 2100UTC. Mark your calendars and set aside some time to join in the fun that **Saturday afternoon**. I plan to be operating QRP for this Sprint and add new Fists to my lists for a QRP Century Award. I almost earned enough points in the last

Spring Sprint to finish my first QRO Century Award and I went over the one hundred mark the following afternoon.

These Sprints really are great fun so get your log sheets ready and join in. You will be glad you did. Then send me a copy of your log by Nov. 11, 1997. It doesn't matter whether you made one contact, twenty or a hundred, we are interested to see who participated and how you did. Your comments are also welcome so lets hear from you. My address is: Tom Waits, AC5JH, 4346 Rose Garden Circle Zachary, La. 70791 Hope to hear you at the Fall Sprint, until then, GUD CW TO U 73 DE AC5JH SK..

*These rules may seem complicated, but read them thru a few times! They are this way to promote Novice and DX participation...*

**BANDS:** Operation is limited to 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter amateur bands. Work stations once per band. 2-way CW only.

**CATEGORIES:** There are two categories -- QRP is limited to 5 watts output power or less; QRO is over 5 watts output power. To count as a QRP entry a station must operate QRP for the entire contest. A station can not enter both QRP and QRO categories.

### SCORING: QSO POINTS:

If YOU are a General class license or higher:

Each QSO with a Novice/Tech FISTS member is worth 10 points.

Each QSO with a General or higher FISTS member is worth 5 points.

Each QSO with a Novice/Tech non-FISTS member is worth 5 points.

Each QSO with a General or higher non-FISTS member is worth 2 points.

If YOU are a Novice or Tech, count 10 points per QSO with FISTS members, and 5 points per QSO with non-FISTS.

**MULTIPLIERS:** Each State or Canadian province counts as a multiplier. Count each only once, no matter how many times worked. However, DX countries count as a multiplier on each band worked.

**FINAL SCORE:** QSO points times Multipliers. Logs must show all exchange information, mark Novice/Tech stations worked as /N or /T. Novice and Tech station logs must indicate their license class status on their logs. QRP stations must indicate their power status on their logs. Logs without such an indication will be considered QRO status.

## Setting Up On Budget

by James A. Brown

This is my first installment of a series of articles for the Keynote. I will endeavor to explain how I have constructed my station to achieve reasonable performance at low cost under some very severe restrictions in the hope that this case study will be useful to fellow FISTS facing similar problems.

Before I continue, I must profess that I am not an expert in any particular field of ham radio, but I do have a lot experience sitting in front of receivers of various caliber from the cat-whisker crystal set of my youth to the ultramodern computer controlled systems used by our government for point-to-point communications and for intelligence collection. Hooked to these super receivers have been antennas of various styles from football field size rhombics to huge log-periodic beams to steerable-beam/omnidirectional Wullenwebers that cover several football fields to 150 foot diameter parabolic dish antennas for satellite and deep-space work. These systems were located all over the world at sites that were specifically picked to offer a low-noise RF environment in order to maximize the strength of received signals without man-made interference. These receiving systems are so large and so advanced that we hams can only dream about someday operating such magnificent systems. We must understand that military receiving systems are designed for a specific purpose. Top engineers are employed to design from the ground up a receiving site that provides excellent and consistent reception of signals emanating from a specific geographical location. There is no such thing as a "general-purpose" site that will provide quality reception from everywhere in the world.

In contrast, a ham station is usually designed as a general-purpose site that will (hopefully) allow DX and local reception. We normally have little control over our location. That means we must endure the hardships of harsh man-made local interference, poor ground conditions, and usually very limited space to construct our antenna farm. Additionally, we have severe constraints placed upon us financially. We are not in the business of communicating, we are engaging in the hobby of amateur radio. We must not allow hobby to demand too much of our precious income.

Realizing now that our ham station is just a low-end, low-budget, low-tech receiving site, can we really communicate with distant stations? After all, we are not engineers, we inhabit inferior locations with high noise levels, and we use small, inexpensive antennas. You bet we can, and here's how I did it.

I live on a 150 by 75 foot city lot. My back

yard has an umbrella of very old and very high pecan trees so thick I can barely see the sky when looking straight up. Two of the trees are separated by a little over one-half wave length at 40 meters. I enjoy working both DX and rag chewing on all bands between 40 meters and 10 meters and "informal" contesting. I employ CW, voice, and RTTY in that order of preference. Most of my radio time is spent on 40 and 20 meters with occasional excursions to the higher bands. When propagation improves, I will move the bulk of my operations up in frequency to take advantage of improved DX. I have little desire to work 160 or 80 meters, but would like the capability to do so if necessary. I use 2 meters for packet operation on the local DX cluster, but I do not frequent the FM voice scene. I use a tube-final transceiver at 5 to 110 watt levels, and a legal-limit amplifier, both of early 1980 vintage. I have reasonable income in the upper-middle-class bracket, but choose to engage in ham radio on a minimal budget.

Living on a corner lot, my property is surrounded to the north and east by a mass of noisy power lines and transformers that consistently produce S9 interference. The power, telephone and cable TV feeds to my house split my backyard in half. As you can see, my location is far from desirable and probably much like yours. By using the lessons I learned from the government, I have largely overcome the technical problems caused by my poor location and I now greatly enjoy my hobby.

How many times have you heard "You can't work 'em if you can't hear 'em." To hear 'em well, you must obtain the best antenna you possibly can, put it high in the air at the best location possible, and you are on your way toward constructing your personal super-station. But what kind of antenna is "best"? One that is best for your budget, best for your location, and best for your purposes. The "best" antenna is one that you can afford, one that fits your available space, and one that you will use!

With so little space available in both horizontal and vertical directions in my back yard, my choice of antenna types were severely limited. My two options were laying something on the ground, or sticking something in a tree. Naturally, I chose the latter. I could go up from the ground with a vertical for about 40 feet, or I could fit a dipole between two convenient tree limbs about 35 feet high, or both!

Wishing to satisfy my desire for rag chewing, I decided to implant a dipole in the dense foliage of my overhead canopy. I chose the dipole as my first antenna because it works, it is inexpensive, and it would put me on the air quickly. I thought the dipole

would be an excellent antenna for close-in rag chewing, contesting, x.058 frequencies, and nets. Turning to more technical considerations, I reasoned that if I hung the dipole at a low height, say 30 feet, I could force the radiation pattern higher than if it were hung at the proper 40 meter height of 65 feet. Also, when operating 20 meters, the 30 foot height was close to the recommended height for a 30 degree takeoff angle. Now lets see, it fit my available space, it fit my budget, and it fit my purpose.

After consulting the ARRL manual for the center-frequency lengths of 40 and 20 meters, I constructed a parallel dipole for 40 and 20 meters, using 14 gauge house wire with the insulation left on, and some short lengths of PVC pipe to spread the wires by about six inches at the feed and at the ends of the 20 meter wires and for the center insulator. I used a 50 foot piece of RG-58 soldered directly to the wires across the center PVC insulator, applied some coax waterproofing sealer, snaked the antenna through the limbs of an interfering tree, tossed the end ropes over the limbs of the support trees and hauled it into place. Total cost of this project was about \$8.00 and this simple antenna instantly put me on 40, 20, and 15 meters. No balun, no fancy insulators, no expensive antenna wire, no bulky coax -- just pure functionality.

For all of you technical types out there, you probably noticed that I made no mention of pruning the antenna for the lowest SWR at my preferred operating frequency. I do not insist that my SWR meet the magical 1:1 measurement, only that it be within a reasonable value across the band. To me, a reasonable value is any ratio below 4:1! I simply cut the antenna elements to the calculated lengths, assembled the antenna, and let the SWR fall where it may. Here's why. First, a resonant antenna such as a dipole has of theoretical SWR of 1:1 at only one operating frequency. If you move off of that frequency, the SWR goes up. Period. Since I don't operate on only one frequency, I'm always going to have an SWR above 1:1, so I don't worry about it. If I can stay below 4:1 or so across the entire band, it is good enough for me.

Try this experiment -- build a dipole for 10Mhz with a 5:1 SWR. Tune up WWV and measure the signal strength. Prune this antenna for 1:1 and again measure the signal strength. Any difference? Nope! And if there was a difference, was it because you improved the SWR or because propagation conditions changed? Dunno, can't tell.

What is important is that your transmitter can push RF into the antenna without the protection circuits kicking in and cutting back your power so it doesn't

self-destruct. If this is true for your equipment, then by all means get the SWR down to where your equipment can deliver its signal properly. In my case, I purposely use a transceiver with tube-finals. They match a wider range of loads and are much more tolerant of high SWR.

Also, I don't worry about leaves and limbs touching my antenna, I don't worry about stretch in my copper house wire (unless it breaks), and I don't worry about pattern distortion that could be 'cured' with an expensive balun. You can't tell the difference on the air between a dipole with fancy this-and-that and one that is plain-jane. And my plain-jane works just as well as your more expensive 'optimized' antenna! There is an old axiom that definitely applies here: eighty-five percent of a project can be completed with ten percent of available funds, but the remaining 15 percent of the project will consume the other ninety percent of your budget. Spend the ten percent and get an antenna that is 85% perfect, save the rest for another project!

### Meet Mike and Matt

Matt T. Todd, AF4FE, and Mike J. Todd, AF4FF, are the 12 year old twins of Ron Todd, K4WZ, and Beth Todd, KU4JG, of Forest Park, Georgia, south of Atlanta. Matt and Mike's grandpa is also a ham - Gene Bristow, AE4WD, of Lavonia, Georgia. Both Matt and Mike upgraded this summer from no-code Tech to Extra.

Both of these young hams got their first license in August of 1996. This year, when school let out for the summer on June 4, Matt and Mike began studying to upgrade. They passed 5 wpm code on June 21, but they didn't stop there. Between June 21 and July 19, they passed both 13 wpm and the written General. After just three days, Matt passed 20 wpm code. Three weeks after Matt and Mike passed the General, they both passed the Advanced (after several attempts). One more week brought Matt up to Extra and Mike passing 20 wpm code. On the last weekday of summer vacation, Mike finally passed the Extra written exam! These hardworking serious young hams have been active both on SSB and CW. Both are FISTS members and are also active with QRP, including each building their own QRP rigs. They are also active in local clubs and help with local events.

We're getting a lot of 'under 21' hams lately in FISTS. That's a great sign for the future of CW!

Hi Gang! Hard to believe Fists is celebrating its 10 year Anniversary. Looking back I realize that I have been a member myself for 8 yrs. Through this period I have seen the club grow steadily and glad to see the continued interest in CW as a valid mode of communication in the Amateur Radio community.

I also have noticed that a large number of the members are QRP enthusiasts. What follows may put off a lot of these folks, but I thought it was time to look at the other side of the coin, so to speak. Personally I have no interest in QRP operation as my belief is this is just a test of the operating skills and the equipment of the receiving station. (I am sure I will get a lot of flak over this statement). Take it with a grain of salt. I have worked many QRP stations and have managed to pull many a weak signal out of the noise. In fact I have been offered awards for doing just this. I guess in this respect QRP for me is a little bit of fun as I am an active award chaser but I much prefer working a station with a good signal.

Another thing that I find annoying is the term QRP. The term is used to describe low power operation but I think it should be discontinued and replaced by ERP. A typical example: 2 QRP stations running 5 W outputs. One using a dipole at 25 ft, the other using a stacked yagi array at 150 ft. As you can see both are considered QRP but the ERP of both these stations are completely different. So what is QRP? I leave that to you QRP ops to answer.

I feel fortunate to live and be licensed to operate amateur radio here in the US. The FCC has seen fit to give us a reasonable maximum rf power level to work with. I can already here some of you saying "only enough power to do the job". Well after going through the bottom of this solar cycle there were times when even 1.5 kw out was not enough for some contacts.

I have used RF amps for at least 10 years and will continue to do so as long as the FCC allows it. Hi power operation I find quite gratifying, it sure is nice to get a 599 report when everyone else is getting 559 or less. I am also an active DXer and it sure is nice to break a pileup on the first or second try.

Also now that technology has taken a lot of opportunity away with respect to home brewing equipment, you can still build RF amps with no difficulty. I live in the mid east part of Michigan and sure appreciate those glowing tubes on a cold winters night too. If you are tired of poor signal reports or not getting those contacts you want, try a little QRO and you might be pleasantly surprised. After all there is nothin wrong with a little "FIRE IN THE WIRE."

There is a story in the November 1935 QST about the World Championship Radio Code Speed Tournament, written by the winner, the famous Ted McElroy. He won at "only" 69 wpm, making just one error! Ted set the all-time record of 75.2 wpm in 1939.

The contestants typed their copy and had to capitalize names and places and words beginning a sentence, or be penalized. Imagine having to do that just to pass your 20wpm. McElroy's advice: "The only bit of advice I want to pass along to youngsters who hope someday to take the title away from me is this: get yourself a good typewriter and a good short-wave receiver. Sit down and practice ten or fifteen minutes a day. You'll be surprised at how quickly you'll develop speed. For high speeds the typewriter is important."

There are numerous articles about CW operation in old CQ's and QST's. If anyone has found some of the more interesting ones I for one would like to read about it, either through the Keynote or via my e-mail [DZJG58A@PRODIGY.COM](mailto:DZJG58A@PRODIGY.COM).

### **What's Happening in Canada?**

John KQ6ES writes, "In response to the disturbing news from VE1ZAC (thanks for the QSL, Jeff!) about the RAC and its apparent anti-code position, I have noticed that 3 of the newest amateur radio contests are sponsored by Canadian clubs, and TWO of the three are PHONE ONLY. It is very, very unusual to have a contest that does not allow CW or does not have a separate contest for both phone and CW. These contests are the Ontario QSO Party of a couple of months back, and the Atlantic QSO Party in September. So perhaps indeed something strange is going on in Canada that needs more attention brought to it. On the other hand, the Peace Country ARC is running a QRS Contest in November that is for slow speed, 5wpm and up, 80m and 160m contacts only. It includes a category for "single operator with Elmer". I hope it is a success. Anyone interested in the details should e-mail [ve6tur@telusplanet.net](mailto:ve6tur@telusplanet.net). Perhaps those of us that enjoy contesting could help them out, if the rules allow it, by handing out some points."

Canadian FISTS - do you know of any hamfests around the border area (Windsor, Toronto, etc) ? We need to spread the CW word into Canada. If I can't get to the hamfests myself, maybe some of our members in the area could make the trip. If we can't get a table, we can at least put piles of sample newsletters and applications around for people to pick up.

## QRP With John Shannon

With this column I begin a second year of being a FISTS columnist. The first year has been very rewarding for me, thanks to your valuable input. I hope that I have helped you with your QRP efforts and gotten several of you interested in QRP.

When my first column appeared in the Keynote, the FISTS membership had reached 2500. Now it is over 3500. Because of that tremendous growth, I am going to offer a reprise of the first year of columns.

If you want to look at any of the previous columns, they are available on my Internet site at <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/3852>.

In the first year we looked at basic operation with QRP, and also delved into QRP contesting and most recently, QRP Dxing. We featured columns on the technical aspects of QRP with hints on how to make your equipment more efficient. One column I particularly enjoyed doing was taking you along with me while I operated the 1996 SS contest. Another article of that type featured my 1000 consecutive days of QRP QSO's. I informed you of the many QRP clubs that exist to help you with QRP operation. I also attempted to answer your questions and comments along the way.

We listened to you when you wanted us to review different QRP rigs in the Keynote. At first, Nancy and I thought we shouldn't promote other rigs since the club has its own QRP kit. Now we solicit reviews from the membership. If you own a QRP rig, and would like to try your hand at writing a review of it, contact Nancy. The only requirement is that it should be a review and not an advertisement for the rig.

Now as I embark on my second year of writing, it is even more important that I have your input for the column. What would you like to see discussed this year? What questions do you have about QRP? I thought it would be interesting to share your QRP accomplishments with the membership, but I got very little response to that idea. I still would like to do it, though. Let me know what you have accomplished with QRP with complete details about your station equipment, especially the antenna system.

There was a minor controversy involving a few hams about my emphasis on the different types of QRP operation. I operate what is called 'pure' QRP, a term that was not coined by me, but has been around for many years. It simply means keeping the output from your antenna at a QRP level by using simple wire antennas. I have nothing whatsoever against those who use a rig with 5 watts output and feed that output into a huge multi-element antenna system that boosts their Effective Radiated Power (ERP) to a much higher fig-

ure. I just think that a distinction should be made when comparing results and accomplishments. After all it is much easier to do something with QRP if you have a huge antenna system. As an example, an antenna array with a gain of 13 DB increases a transmitter output of 5 watts to 100 W ERP albeit in only one direction.

I want you to know what can be done with a simple QRP setup because many of you live in apartments or are otherwise location challenged. Telling you what I have done with 'pure' QRP is intended to encourage you to try hamming with a simple setup. You do not need a huge antenna system on a hilltop location to enjoy ham radio. That is the bottom line. I don't think that hearing about someone's accomplishments with a huge antenna system and ideal location is going to encourage you if you don't have the resources to duplicate that setup.

I have a little space left so let me cover some of your comments. I received a ham radio message from W4IRE through W3TZW stating that he enjoyed the columns on Dxing. That's just one of many comments like that I have received. I don't have space to list everyone's call, but I do appreciate each and every comment.

Corb, K8UCL sent the following via Email: At your suggestion in a recent issue of FISTS Key Note, I thought I'd drop you a note regarding my QRP ops. After a long absence from "ham" activities, I've been back on the air for almost a year now. I've been operating CW-QRP exclusively. I use a Heathkit HW-8 that I built about 20 years ago, but never saw much air time, and a couple of simple wire antennas that I've strung in the attic of my two story home. I must attest to what you say can be done using QRP is true, even with less than optimum antenna arrangements. The other day I received in the mail from the ARRL my WAS Award with CW and QRP endorsements. The award from QRP-ARCI should be arriving soon. I am awaiting a QSL confirming Asia so that I can apply for my WAC-QRP. So far I have worked 81 DX countries towards DXCC-QRP. I'm also getting close to having worked enough FISTS members to qualify for a Century Award QRP. If I hadn't done it myself, I wouldn't have thought you could achieve so much using less than 5 watts. It does take patience and persistence, but it does pay off and is a lot of fun. The information and advice that you provide in your column and at your web site are valuable assets to anyone interested in operating QRP.

This is the kind of stuff I'd like to hear from other FISTS about their QRP accomplishments. That's it for column # 13. -30-

## The Traffic Hound

by Pete K8OUA

Did you miss this article last month? I hope you did! A great trip to Newfoundland (VO1), including a visit to the easternmost point in North America, the spot where Marconi received the first transatlantic message by wireless, a chance to operate the special event station VO500JC (that's Victor Oscar Five Hundred Juliet Charlie), and waking up to some of the most glorious scenery in the world (my XYL in a sleeping bag!! -- as well as the mountains, fjords, and lakes of western Newfoundland) meant that I wasn't here to beat Nancy's deadline. And, I do apologize for that, but, geez, it was fun!

I'd like to start off by giving some thanks -- first, to Arnie, KT4ST, for his unflagging loyalty to the FISTS Slow Net, taking the NCS spot and keeping the net going in my absence. I'd like to say thanks to all those hams who continue to QNI the FISTS Slow Net week after week. The FISTS Slow Net still meets, as it always has, at 9.00 PM Eastern time on 3.682 MHz every Tuesday and Thursday night. If, for some reason Arnie or I aren't there, please feel free to call the net together yourself, and send me a message later. Arnie will handle the net as NCS on the first and third Tuesday of each month, and I will take it on the second and fourth Tuesday as well as on Thursdays. But, if you want a chance to take the net, please let me know and I will set up a night for you.

My last article seems to have had a little bit of an effect, because I did receive some messages through the NTS from hams across the country. Dave, VE7DGW, from North Vancouver, has sent me several about a west coast FISTS traffic net that he has set up. I don't have details about time and frequency, but when I get them from Dave, I will print them *here* (and I'll put them on the masthead! de WZ8C) A west coast FISTS traffic net is great news. I'd also like to thank those hams who have sent me messages through the system letting me know just how they feel about traffic handling and whether or not they agree with my comments. It doesn't bother me if you don't agree, you know, and I can take it -- remember, I have three daughters, I can take any kind of criticism!! It is important though, that we keep traffic handling alive by sending traffic through the system!!

Are you unsure of how to send a message through the NTS? Do you long for a slow speed net that will welcome you and your traffic? Are you looking for an easy way to get your traffic into the system? Well, let me suggest a couple of places to start. First, why not begin with the slow speed net in your own section, or close to your own section? Many sections still have

such nets, and they are crying for newcomers. I guarantee that you will be made to feel welcome, and that the mistakes you make (yes, you'll make mistakes!) will be overlooked, and you'll be assisted. OK, how do you find such a net? The ARRL Net Directory, available through the ARRL Bookstore, lists all kinds of nets, including slow speed CW traffic nets.

Listen in on one or more of these, at least till you get up the courage to jump in and get your feet wet.

FISTS Slow Net -- 9.00 PM eastern time on 3.682 MHz every Tuesday and Thursday;

Maryland Slow Net -- 7.30 PM eastern time on 3.717 MHz daily;

Maine Slow Speed Net -- 6.00 PM eastern time on 3.685 MHz every Tues, Thurs, Sunday ;

All Florida Slow CW Training Net -- 8.00 PM eastern time on 3.715 MHz daily;

Mississippi Slow Net -- 7.00 PM central time on 3.680 MHz daily;

Triple States Slow CW Net -- 6.45 PM eastern time on 7.140 MHz Tuesdays;

Oklahoma / Texas Slow Net -- 8.00 PM central time on 3.719 MHz daily;

Oklahoma Training Net (CW) -- 6.30 PM central time on 3.693 MHz daily;

Wisconsin Slow Speed Net -- 6.30 PM central time on 3.645 MHz daily;

Alberta Traffic Net -- 6.00 PM mountain time on 3.685 MHz daily;

Ontario Beaver Slow Speed Net -- 11.15 PM UTC on 3.645 MHz daily.

Ohio Saturday Sunday Net -- 8.00 AM eastern time on 3.577 MHz Saturdays and Sundays.

These are just a few slow speed CW nets that I picked out of the ARRL Net Directory.(1995-96), and some of these nets may not be in existence at this time. If you don't hear one, try another. I also picked them out arbitrarily, and I know that I left out many many good slow CW training nets. So, if yr if you know I have it wrong, or if I've let your favorite slow speed net off the list, or if I have it right and you like my list, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!! SEND ME A NTS RADIOGRAM!! Stand up for your rights. I warn you, though, while I don't read critical email, I have nochoice but to read an NTS message I've received! Send it via the traffic system and make sure I read it! Till next month, let me say 73, es hpe cu on the nets soon -- ARF! -- Pete K8OUA



**If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it fall; did it really happen ?**

When I hear arguments about eliminating the CW requirement, this question comes to mind. If you use CW, you certainly are not going to spend much time in that part of the HF spectrum to really appreciate what is going on there. I spend many hours listening to the CW portions of the amateur spectrum and enjoy it as much as I do fishing. I've made many contacts and friends, even during the low sunspot cycle. Some of the best operators that I've had the pleasure to work have been while operating CW. While it doesn't take much power to communicate with CW, some skill is required. Was I dreaming or have there been times when I've heard all portions of the CW spectrum teaming with signals? Pile-ups here, CQ's there and even Rag Chew's.

I operate on phone also. I have a modest 100 watt 'barefoot' station, radiating a multiband vertical up about 25 feet. At times, I've called CQ on phone till I'm blue in the face and no one has called back. Does that mean that nobody is on that band? I don't think so! I listen around and move a little up or down and call again. Sooner or later I make a contact.

Has anyone listened around 21.300Mhz lately ? I believe the whole amateur community is aware of the frequent illegal operating practices that go on there. I sometimes have to look at my rig a second time just to assure myself I'm not using a CB radio...10-4?! Has anyone ever had duck calls or threatening voices over dub their phone QSO? I've had this happen on 10 meters, also. Especially around large metropolitan areas like New York.

When I was 9 or 10 years old, back in the 60's, I built a little receiver from a kit my father bought as a Christmas present. A diode, a small tuning capacitor, some enameled copper wire and don't forget the little ear piece. Sorry...batteries not included. I can remember laboring over the instructions, bugging mom and dad about whether this or that was right.

Static!.... Static was the first thing I heard from that rig. I will never forget the goosebumps I felt. When I figured out what a ground was, after a little experimentation, I began to hear all kinds of sounds. Tuning around, I found radio stations and even funny little beeping noises and things that sounded like birdies. It was those first days, with my little cheap radio rig, that I was in awe of the powers and mysteries of things that were working around me.

When I was 13, my father surprised me with the most beautiful radio I ever saw, a Grundig multiband SW radio. I spent hours SWLing. I was captivated by the Morse code I was hearing. Time moves quickly.

High School, college, a stint in the Navy as an Interior Communications Technician, out into civilian life, I became a computer field engineer and landed as a contractor for NASA as a Senior Engineering Electronics Technician. A long way from the radio kit with a hunk of wire hanging from a radiator.

Those memories stayed with me in travels along the way. Nine 9 years ago I was befriended by NA3Z (Richard Morgan/ my ELMER/ now Silent Key). Invited to his shack, he began turning on his rigs and antenna rotor control until we heard loud mumbling voices. Once again, I connected back to my little radio when I first heard those static hisses. I was hooked again. I couldn't wait to get my license. NA3Z was the head of the educational committee for the local Ham club, the PROS. I went to the classes (which were FREE ) and in a little less than a year and a half I made Extra. Learning the code was a challenge, yet fun. It was mastering the skill of sending and receiving code that made my license valuable to me. It took alot of effort to earn it. I am very careful not to abuse it. It was something not easy to achieve.

The argument that CW is dead may be true in a commercial sense, but has everyone forgotten that this is a hobby? I joined FISTS club a year ago, after reading about it on the Internet. I am member number 2504. As I write this, the FISTS club has swollen to well over 3500 members. How could an organization continue to grow if interest in CW was fading? I have improved my operations skills and learned how to handle network traffic on FISTS slow code nets.

I had great fun building a QRP rig for 40, one for 30 and one for 20 meters. They all cost less than \$100. It was really neat to get 599 from California at the bottom of the Solar Cycle. Hey...Is that neat or what...!??? Take a look at the QRP-L Homepage and see how busy the mail archive is. Those are CW rigs most of them are building. I just received my Century Award #187 from FISTS and think I might go for the QRP Award next after I finish WAS 40m CW.... come on Hawaii and Alaska!

Part 97 of the FCC rules cover the laws governing the amateur radio spectrum and point out the reasons for the existence of the amateur frequencies. One of the reasons is to have a pool of trained radio operators and technicians to fulfill any future needs during a time of crisis.

I can't tell you the last time that I heard of a 9 or 10 year old wire up a microprocessor, putting the final touches on a packet program so he or she could forward mail through a home-brew 2meter rig..... all for less than \$100.00. *Get real!*

The point of the matter, CW is a great learning

tool and a great place to start if you desire to learn about the hobby. While it is not the panacea for learning all about the hobby, it is a valuable learning tool for the fundamental understanding of modulation and antenna functions. We must keep those portions of the spectrum open for exploration and enjoyment. It is a place to start where a young person can afford to get on the air cheaply and safely. I've taught many new Hams in my area and know how hard it is to convey ideas without a fundamental understanding of the subject by the student, as well as, the Elmer.

But the GRAPES OF WRATH has hit our hobby in recent years. Before we all clamor to give up spectrum, rearrange operational area, drop modulation modes and lower standards, I think we should think very long, hard and carefully. Don't forget where most of us started. Dreams, imagination and desire to me were key ingredient. Sure, money was an obstacle but not for a couple of components and wire. If anything is helping to kill this hobby, it's the focus on big money rigs and linear amplifiers.

CW takes the least amount of bandwidth than any other mode. High speed digital, FM and SSB all take a lot more space on the bands. Computer users have increased their use of the Ham bands dramatically over the last couple decades. I think if any mode should be restricted it's the digital modes. This is 'amateur radio', not 'amateur computers'. Many computer users groups exist. Do you want to turn your amateur radio club into a computer users group? I think some have. There's plenty of bandwidth on the Internet cable/wire for E-mail and keyboard chit-chat. Look around a Hamfest these days; see if you can find all the components to build a simple transceiver. Tailgate sections are decreasing and commercial computer vendors are increasing.

SSB and other voice users want more band space to operate. Clean up the space that's already allocated to them. Improve their operating techniques, tune the gear that's being used and teach others to be courteous. Conserve the bands that are already allocated. Put the FCC to task, help police our bands.

Reallocations of bands have already happened. Parts of the spectrum have been given away to commercial ventures. Remember 220 meters? There is now a no-code Technician license. We lowered the standards. I haven't heard the bands improve for the better. 10 meters and 2 meters sound like CB radio and 20 meters is now following suit. I've heard many complaints from new Ham's about those operators with linears won't even talk to them. The weak signals are being ignored like it's QRM. Listen! Listen Listen! I agree we all should QRS a little and enjoy what we

worked so hard for.

It is not the responsibility of Amateur Radio to keep commercial radio equipment vendors from going out of business. Our part of the radio spectrum was set aside as a preservation for our hobby. In my opinion, kind of like a national park. It seems though, some people are willing to sell our part of the forest off to commercial ventures. (i.e. Little LEOs).

If you don't like the radio art get out of the hobby! Leave the Hams alone to their devices they like to fidget and twidget with.. Don't cut the forest down just because you don't like trees. Conserve and maintain Ham Radio's own natural resource. If we don't, it will be polluted, then cut up and sold for scrap. Those who are there to sell it off first are going to make a fortune. Lobbyists are already there with their bags full of money on the Capitals doorsteps asking directions to frequency auctions at the FCC.

It behooves those who are not friends of amateur radio to have us in disarray and disagreement. Divide and conquer works all the time to scuttle any organization. We who love this radio art must make an extra effort to understand the problems on the bands and correct them. Rushing into reorganization without careful consideration by a large consensus is ill gained and unprogressive.

I'm not, for any reason, in favor of reducing our operating privileges and lowering the test standards. Lowering standards only produces poor quality. It's been proven time and time again. We will lose our hobby as we know it. Future generations will have to pay dearly for knowledge that is available for no cost today. The skill of building and really understanding a simple radio could be lost. I'm not running to yell "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" Before we all rush in to rearrange the bands, we owe it to ourselves to step carefully and clearly try to think out the cause and effect of our actions toward reallocation. We might not hear the tree fall. Sincerely, Richard A. Stern  
NW3N FISTS #2504

### CW / QRQ ELITISTS?

Bill, K3AS, wrote about CW Elitists in Issue 7. By all means, let's not become QRQ snobs. But let's not also become CW snobs. I hear too many times that CW ops "don't do phone" because of all the garbage they hear on the ssb bands.

Isn't it better to get on the mike once in a while and try our best to achieve the highest standards of operating and of courtesy? Phone is not going to go away, so let's do what we can to make it better. 73 de KQ6ES  
John, #2406

I have enjoyed the membership in Fists during the 6 months or so since I joined. "The Keynote" is a nice newsletter and I look forward to it each month. But, all the notes from other members stating how CW has become their only passion and they have hung up the mike forever is a bit much.

I learned CW for two purposes. First was to upgrade and get HF privileges. The second was to speak on the CW requirement issue for a position of knowledge, in other words, if you don't know CW, how can you say its not needed. Like many, I found CW enjoyable, but I like phone as well. You won't find my microphone stuck away in a drawer somewhere. It is out on the desk, ready for use.

I enjoy CW and phone contesting. CW contests are a challenge for me to get my speed up to warp speeds. The phone contests are just plain fun. I use them for working towards 5BWAS and DXCC. I rag chew a little at other times, again on both CW and phone.

I have recently begun assembling a 30 meter QRP radio, CW only, for all those who have branded me a heretic. I wanted an HF radio that I could take traveling and not pack the kitchen sink. QRP seemed like just the ticket and with an added challenge.

I tend to hang around the novice bands for CW. I am comfortable at the slower speeds and I feel that I am helping someone trying to upgrade. When you catch up with me, ask about the "Both Oars in the Water" certificate. I vote that CW remains alive and healthy forever, but I like phone, too. Chuck, KE4OAR Fists 3019

### Two Meter CW

There seems to be interest building up in 2 meter CW. The 9/97 CQ Magazine has an article on building and using an interface to work CW with an HT. The 9/96 Keynote included my letter on building a Two meter interface adapted from plans from the 2/92 CQ Magazine, with a key and oscillator. However the magazine was listed in error as CW Magazine, so I got a lot of letters asking for the plans.

That was OK with me, I enjoyed replying to inquiries and sending my adaptation of the plans. For those who are still considering building an interface to get into this part of our hobby, the latest CQ Magazine article discusses the special problems of interfacing to an HT.

At present I'm modifying my 2 meter CW interfaces by adding a new keyer kit that was mentioned in August CQ Magazine on page 58. It's an inexpensive kit sold by Embedded Research, PO Box 92492, Rochester NY 14692 for only \$16.00 pp. This amazing kit is a very small circuit board that can be put in a 2 meter interface box so that paddles can be used

with it. It includes push button programming that converts to straight key, and changes keying speed. It's a super addition to any 2 meter interface. I'll be glad to send my latest circuit that includes the keyer kit to anyone who asks. Those wanting to use CW with their hand-held should also get the July CQ article. 73, Sid Vaughan N0DJD # 2435, 1300 13th St NW A-207, Cedar Rapids IA 52405

### Mobile CW

Safety is the most important element in mobile cw. One really has to pay attention to one's ever-changing surroundings while driving. This is not the time or place for pencil and paper copy. You must copy CW in your head. It is also advisable to QRS, - slow down at least 5 words per minute from your normal QSO speed. Make sure you are very familiar with all the controls on your rig, keyer and antenna tuner. You don't want to be fumbling around while driving. A good idea is to practice in your driveway or a large empty parking lot before you venture out on the highway. If you are not sure if you even want to invest in a mobile CW station, take an old rig or receiver attach a random wire and tape it to your back window. Just listen to CW stations for a few days.

You don't have to operate CW while driving. A mobile station also makes a great portable station. Pull over in an open location, fire up the rig and use paper and pencil if you want to. Run a random wire to a tree with a tuner to match your rig and you will have a much better signal. Don't expect great signal reports with mobile CW. You will have to be happy with 449 to 579 for RST. You may get 599 if you pull into the other station's driveway. At best a mobile signal is 6db down from a dipole. Depending on antenna, band, and conditions, your 100 watts may sound like 10 watts or less to the receiving station. You will still work out better on CW than ssb.

A good book which is out of print, is Don Johnson's W6AAQ (not the actor) 40+5 Years of Mobileering. This book is the current "Bible" for HF Mobileering. I understand he may come out with a new book in the near future.

If you think you may want to operate mobile CW, read all you can get on the subject, internet websites, and best of all eyeball contacts with mobile hams at hamfests. (I hope to put together a list of resources for mobile CW ops in another article.) You can add a lot of enjoyable QSO's to your log, work DX, and make new CW friends all the while you are commuting to work or driving your daughter to her piano lesson. See you on the CW bands.

Marty NC2B/M

## Keyboarding and Morse code

I read with great interest the letter from Cindy, KO6TQ, about keyboarding Morse. I wish to assure her, and others, that there is absolutely nothing wrong with keyboarding and for some it is a necessity.

I joined the Navy in 1965 and was assigned to the Naval Security Group, an intelligence organization heavily involved in all facets of radio operation. I attended radio school at Pensacola, FL where my first task was learning the Morse code. The first week in code school was both exciting and excruciating. I remember a room full of recruits seated at long rows of tables adorned with headphones and an Underwood typewriter on the table fed with a continuous roll of teletype paper. At the head of the class the instructor would shout at the top of his lungs "DIT-DAH" and the class would respond with a resounding "ALPHA" and simultaneously hit the A key on the typewriter. Through this training method, we were taught not only recognition of the code, but how to type as well! After only one week, Morse was mastered. Weeks two through four saw our copy speed skyrocket. Using code tapes piped through the headphones, we typed endless five-character groups of random code at speeds always just a little higher than we could comfortably copy. You really had to strain to keep up (This is what Rich, AC4NW was saying in his correspondence). For fifteen days the sound of Morse was pounded into my brain until there was little room left for anything else. I would hear code in my sleep and heard, not read, street signs and newspapers. I thought I was going crazy! When all was said and done, I could copy 35+WPM of flawless code for hours at a time. The process was so automatic that I could copy Morse while holding conversations with people around me. I also learned how to type with one hand while eating with the other -- not a trivial task for sure. I spent the first several years of my twenty-one year career copying Morse on an R-390A/URR receiver and that Underwood typewriter. My code speed increased to about 45WPM and would have gone higher but for the lack of higher-speed Morse on the circuits.

Today, I can copy about 12WPM in my head, about 20WPM with a pencil, and about 30WPM with a -- you guessed it -- an Underwood typewriter. Since the old Underwoods are hard to find now, I traded up to a computer so I could continue to copy Morse. I use an old 486DX2-66 with an EGA monitor and run a multitasking DOS program called DesqView from Borland. With this DOS multitasking environment, I run a logging program in one window, a Morse keyer in another, and a simple word processor in the third window. It is this word processor that is indispens-

able to me. I don't think about Morse, I don't worry about Morse, I just (to coin a phrase) let my fingers do the walking. Yes, I also use paddles as required, and have actually had entire QSOs using the "manual" method. But to this old man, the keyboard reigns supreme! 73 Jim K5JAZ

Cindy, KO6TQ, the best part about operating in CW is the pleasure you receive. My handicap (Parkinsons) makes sending a real challenge at times. I go keyboard mode then also, and CW contesting is really exciting using programmed CW responses. Hope to CU on HF CW SN, Wes W3ERU.

## KEYBOARDING HELP, PSE?

I just read Cindy, KO6TQ's letter in the August Key Notes and I am interested in knowing more about using a keyboard to send CW. I am handicapped with sever arthritis and have a hard time sending CW, I am using the Benchner keyer thru the Heathkit uMATIC memory keyer. My question is how do I connect a keyboard to the Heathkit uMatic?

I am copying CW on my portable electric typewriter since my arthritis prevents me from writing the characters by hand at a speed above 5 WPM, with the typewriter I can copy much faster. I type 50 WPM! I had not given any thought to using a keyboard for sending CW, but Cindy's article has me thinking of doing that. Needless to say that my arthritis makes it very hard for me to send good CW even using the Benchner keyer.

If one of the FISTS members can give me directions on connecting a keyboard I certainly will appreciate the help. My Email address is: n9cib@wabash.net, my snail mail address is: Ray Grundy, N9CIB, RR #1 Box 237, Louisville, IL 62858-9778 I look forward to every issue of the Key Note and hope to get on the HF bands and talk to many of the FISTS out there. 73 de Ray, FISTS member # 1922

## CLUB MEETING

Fellow FIST member and candidate in this fall's Great Lakes Division Director's race, Joe Falcone N8TI, spoke at the September 3rd meeting of the Butler County (Ohio) VHF Association. Approximately 30 members, listened to Joe's views on the course of the ARRL, CW requirements and the new RF exposure limits. As a result of Joe's speech, several CW operators in the club have become aware of FISTS and expressed interest in joining. Other FISTS in attendance were Ted White N8TW, FIST #3386; Billy McGuire AA8DY, #2763; and Tom Isgro KI8CZ, #2360. -- 73 de KI8CZ Tom Isgro OHIO

## News and Views from FISTS

From John **KQ6ES**: I just had a ragchew with my radio friend Paul, **KQ6EH** and was pleased to hear he is now a Fists, #3429. By the way, I always mess up on those suffixes in our QSO's. **KQ6EH** de **KQ6ES**. I would be interested to know about others who have worked calls very similar to theirs, or opposite to theirs, etc. Perhaps it would make a fun "contest", proof to be in the form of a copy of the QSL card with both calls shown. Finding similar call signs are fun - I was thrilled to work **KOTT** a few years ago. And now we have **FISTS** #3252, John, and #3180, **NINCY** and **KO4TT**, respectively. I hope to get those QSLs for my collection some time, hi!

Steve **K2SB** writes: I think I just worked a bootlegger or a pirate **K9CGD** gave me a **FISTS** number of 2000, in checking I see its listed to a VE station. It was on 40 meters this evening shame he was a pretty good cw op said he had attic antenna etc.

Anyone else run into this guy?

From Tom **W8CCN**: I'm honored to become a member of **FISTS**. Thanks for the nice certificate and interesting mail. At age 90 now, with 75 years of operating with my **W8CCN** call. Only voice operation on 2 meters about 99% CW you must know my love for CW. From spark to space, etc. I still maintain two trans-con nets on 20, **SOWP** and **OOTC**. To me ham radio has been the world's greatest hobby. My best friends are hams several of which are near or past my age. Am a member of **ARRL**, **QCWA**, **SOWP** and **OOTC**. I am 8th district director of **OOTC**. Am maintaining 5 acres on the Western slopes of the Alleghenies now using Ten Tec Corsair with **MLA 2500** Dentron Amp to **TH6DXX** beam at 66 ft on top of my hill and a **G5RV**. It's great to have such an inspiring group fighting for CW and my thanks to Reed **W4DXB** for helping me become a member of your great organization!

From John **N2QCE/F**: It's great to be a part of the action in ham radio with CW and **FISTS**. I love the idea of using designators to identify ourselves to one another and to perspective new members. Gurnee **W9NT** suggested using the ID/**FISTS** as one way to accomplish this. This is a fantastic idea! As a **QRP'er** I use/**QRP** and as a mobile CW op I use /**M**. I will add that I tend to lean more toward Reed **W4DXB**'s /**F** idea for the sake of brevity. Great idea! Way to go! I'm starting to use it today....

From Gary **KC5PPO**: I just recently acquired the July issue of **CQ** magazine and ran across the article of Fred Maia, **W5YI**. This article is the transcript of the debate between him and Nancy **WZ8C**. His comments on CW made me hotter than a finals circuit under high **SWR**!

We all know the advantages and disadvantages of CW, but what Mr. Maia and others of his mindset don't seem to understand is ham radio is a hobby; not commercial or military. Sure, we understand that today's military and commercial businesses need high speed computers for their services; it only makes sense that they use it. But ham radio is a **HOBBY**. Hobbies are made to enjoy and to relax with, not fret over. I remember about a year ago when I upgraded to tech plus and I made my first CW contact with Jack, **AA9BO**. I was hooked immediately and have pounded brass ever since. Sure, I've used other modes, but personally I love CW. Mr. Maia says CW is old and inefficient - other modes are much faster and more accurate. So why fuss with CW? Why go for a walk when you can get somewhere much faster in a car? Why paint a picture when you can use a polaroid that can make accurate pictures in a matter of minutes? Why? Because it is fun and from **FISTS** booming membership it sure seems popular.

I agree with Pete, **K4PTU**, in that we should urge and encourage new hams to shy away from the **W5YI** examiners, and use **ARRL** examiners for VE exams. From what I heard about the debates, I believe Mr. Maia knows that we are a force to be reckoned with. This action will hit him where it hurts worse, and a place he understands - in the pocket book! Keep up the good work Nancy!

From Orin **N4ZMP**: I have had so much fun. We have twelve **FISTS** members here in Pensacola FL and talk on two meters most nights. As for CW speed, I will work any speed I can copy. I have worked some who were so slow I had to write it down, so any one hear me and call, I'll be glad to slow down. This is the real reason for being a ham...to communicate. I have seen my call as sponsor 13 times and have sent out info packs to more than 20, so all hail the power of **FISTS** and CW!

Don **WD8OCV** says he got his **FISTS** club ID badge and says it's really sharp, they did a nice job on it. Don also just send in for his first Century Award - it took him three years, but he did it! I'm glad you like the new format of the Keynote, Don.

From Bart **W6OWP**: A word of caution is in order for members in the western US. 7058 has long been used by K7HLR for code practice. K7HLR presently sends several hours of practice daily in two sessions. The first begins at 1300 UTC and the second at 2300 UTC with speeds from 5 through 40 WPM. We wouldn't want a QRM situation to develop such as occurs from digital operations on W6ADO's 7.099 practice, K7HLR's material is always interesting. I often tune his signal while working in my shop. I don't need the practice (I was once a commercial op) but I enjoy listening to the historical radio related events his schedules recount. For FISTS contacts on 40, I've been using 7058 as a reference but operate on the high side.

FISTS, please be sure to listen to the frequencies before you put out your CQ - and we have sooooo many FISTS in the world today, let's spread out! Tune up or down 10 KHz, try out the Novice subbands. Remember "courtesy at all times."

From Cliff **N2FX**: So, as members of FISTS, you're interested in preserving Morse code on the amateur bands. Well, get on the bands and say it with your key. I don't hear that many members on ANY given day. It's not mandatory to use .058 as an operating frequency.

Get on the CW end and "CQ". While working a station, let them know you're FISTS. Be a salesman, upgrade your ticket and your CW speed NOW. Everyone can do it. Let's not have complacency and inactivity replace our club premise and pride. Get on the bands, be heard, carry the FISTS banner. Over 3,000 members should make a big noise. CW forever.

From Chris **W6VL**: Just wanted to say how much I've enjoyed being a member of FISTS and have had some nice QSOs with a lot of you. I wish I could get on the air more but I'm a landscaper at 45 years of age and can only get on for a few QSOs at night. Everyone has been very accommodating since I became a ham 3 years ago. Learning the code and radio theory has boosted my confidence to achieve success in other areas of my life and has gotten me through some hard times also. Hope to hear you all on the air. FB Chris...I'm glad you're enjoying being with FISTS! So, you think I sound like a Rush Limbaugh fan? I'll take it you mean that as a compliment, hi!

From Dave **KB0UDM**: Please renew my membership. I really appreciate the positive PR FISTS creates for CW and Ham radio. I look forward to receiving the newsletter. Thanks, Dave!!

From Peter **AA2VG**: I have been a ham for about five years. Collecting those countries has been my primary hobby, any CW QSO is always a thrill. Recently I have been meeting more FISTS members. Occupation is M.D. (internist & pulmonary specialist). A good CW QSO is a great way to wind down from a full day's work. So why should they keep CW as a requirement for our hobby? Because if it had not been a requirement I would have missed out on the fun of all my CW QSOs. Boy, I am looking forward to QRP when the sun spots return.

Jack **KA2YDT** has his antennas all down because of his house expansion. He hopes to have them back up by winter and to be able to get on the air.

Corb **K8UCL** writes: Enclosed is my check for another year of membership in FISTS. I may be sending in my renewal a bit early, but I wouldn't want to risk missing an issue of the Key Note. Each month I look forward to reading the letters from FISTS members and especially John Shannon's QRP column. I've certainly enjoyed my first year of membership and have delighted in meeting so many genuinely nice people... the FISTS organization must attract them.

During all of my active "Ham" years I operated CW exclusively. After being off the air for quite some time, I returned to active status last year. The rig available to me was a Heathkit HW-8 that I had built 20 or 50 years ago. I checked my old logs and saw that I had made less than a dozen contacts with it. I figured it had a lot of QSOs left in it, so I strung a couple of simple wire antennas in my attic, fired up, and commenced to have a ball. The rig is still going strong and I try to get on the air each day. I've worked almost enough FISTS members to get my Century Award QRP. My thanks to you Nancy and all of the other FISTS worker volunteers and members who make FISTS CW Club possible and my membership a most enjoyable experience. Our pleasure, Corb - And FB on getting the HW-8 back on the air!

For Chuck **KB2SWI** - Sri, the Elmer Awards aren't available from here. You have to write to Geo to get one, including the equivalent of a 'pound' for return postage.

From Paulette **WB9VHF**: Last night I finally mailed off my renewal for my FISTS membership. FISTS is a real fellowship and sorority and I'm glad it exists for the friendship it provides and the opportunity to promote Morse Code.

Thanks for the kind words and the renewal, Paulette!



From Lee **K4AHM**: Just thought I would drop you a line and let you share some of the exciting event's I experienced. I was overjoyed when I had the opportunity to work **G3ZQS**. We had a very wonderful chat for about 20 minutes, condx were good. It is something I will always treasure, to have worked #0001. He was at **GX0IPX** station, which is #1000. Oh! Yes, I have received cards for conformation. FB on working 'Father FISTS, Lee!

From Wil **W5GXM**: I have always read with great interest the English section. When I visited England in the 60s, the sincere friendliness and warmth of the people endeared them to me. I felt very much at home.

This summer I have been engaged in antenna work. It's been hot and dry, but I've managed to straighten out a windmill tower knocked down by a tornado and maybe I'll get some kind of beam up soon. Perhaps you'll hear me through my TT Century 21/vertical next Party- if I can prune it tomorrow. My old fist sort of got set back before electronic keyers so I don't feel right doing a 3-1-1, I swing a bit.

Tell those guys who want to get rid of CW: It saved my life in the military more than once, and in a foreign language yet. I have to zip my lip when I'm listening to local Extras hand out info on "how to find a doctor who'll write a waiver stating you're mentally incapable of reading code." This embarrasses me. I'll propose we compromise and accept the common world standards of 5 wpm, Novice, and 12/15 wpm higher classes. Then we can say "we meet common accepted standards and take a back seat to no one." These requirements will not block out intelligent people, and will be an incentive to come in and upgrade. Keep up your good work - Let's pound brass.

Paul **AA1RR** recently joined FISTS and discovered two people that he had been trying to locate for months. Believe it or not, Paul left the last letter off of each callsign when he entered them in his log. He even called the ARRL in an effort to locate these individuals, but finally found them in the Keynote! FB Paul, and thanks for the kind words about the Keynote and my work for FISTS! Fighting for CW is a worthwhile cause and I don't plan on giving up - we've got to stick together

From Pete **KC5GXL**: I like to qsl to dx but have an old callbook. I'm not a member of the ARRL so can't use the outgoing buro...(I can and do use the incoming service). Is there a service like the QRZ but for dx accessible by e-mail? I am active on 2-meter packet and have a daily updated callbook available for US hams too. This doesn't help with dx. I am not set up

for the cd-rom callbook, and am not on the internet, only have e-mail access at this time...even though I don't know if a foreign callbook is available on the internet. Well, this is my predicament, maybe a FIST knows the solution. Nancy, the "keynote" is great. Keep up the fine work. It's fun being a FIST! #2032 Pete...kc5gxc@juno.com

From Bill **VE5HQ**: I am a fairly new ham, having obtained my Basic License (Canada) in Nov of 96 and my 5 wpm CW in April of 97. I really enjoy CW and currently work 80 meters when I can. Sometimes I feel I will never reach 12 wpm for full privileges - which is all that is required in Canada. However- I am determined that one day soon I will get there, and hopefully beyond.

Actually, I understated - I luv CW. At times I will go to the voice section of my rig only to find myself hastily retreating back to the CW frequencies. There is something definitely mysterious about sending those dots and dashes off into space - and waiting - there is nothing sweeter than to hear your callsign coming back - in code; "CONTACT!!". I love it! AI9L, Jess, and Vince, **KG8WF**, suggested I look into FISTS. Welcome to FISTS, Bill! I'm sure you'll find many like-minded people here.

From Tom **W1GO**: Received my FISTS "stifficate" today. I fired up on 14.058 because band sounded good. Worked first station called. Was called by second station; followed by three others. I had to quit because of other obligations, but it was a gas. I've been pounding brass on and off since 1940, and this is fun! Glad that FISTS exists. Plan to pursue it vigorously and to promote the FISTS club. Already have worked another stn who wants to know what's it's all about. One day I'll tell you what kind of an "antenna" I am using on 20.

Well, Tom! Now you've got us curious - what R U using on 20?

From Jim **AA0JX**: The Cedar Valley ARC is doing something different with it's Amateur Radio Licensing Classes this fall, *We are going to drop the technical part for this round and concentrate on the code.* We have lots of tech's and others that would like to upgrade, so 8 weeks of structured classes may help. Classes meet at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Ia, Monday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00. *We will start slow and probably split up when we have some who would like to get to 13 or even 20 wpm.*

To get the whole story on this please check out the CVARC homepage at <http://cvarc.rf.org>

I think that's the best idea I've heard in a long time, Jim! Hope more clubs follow suit. Nice home page - how about putting a FISTS page link on there 8-)

From Tom AC4XT: Hi Nancy, was nice seeing you at Dayton and good to see your picture in the newsletter again. I ran into a fellow inquiring about fists and exchanged some E-mail with him. He asked me what FISTS was about, but he mainly wanted to complain about the numerous times FISTS members jump on their frequency and just start calling CQ FISTS without inquiring whether the frequency is in use (14.056, the "County Hunter's Net"). I told him I was sorry to hear that since we strive to be polite and courteous. Told him I'd mention it to you.

Also, Many, too many, members are treating our club as a "Contest", seems all they want to do is collect numbers, I know what happens when they feel they have met their objective, Century award or maybe even the second award, they quit. I have over 230 points now, just can't seem to find the time it takes to fill out the form for the second award, but that's not my main interest, I like to rag chew and make new friends, not easy for me but am willing to make the effort. It seems most are content with saying "Nice hearing you again

and CUL". I don't think it's me. Have fun, 73 Tom  
Since "courtesy at all times" is one of our mottos, I would hate to think that FISTS are just barging in on the air without asking QRL? and listening carefully! Nobody owns the frequencies, including .058 and .056. This is a congested area - go up or down 10 KHz and try a CQ FISTS there! Let's spread out! Thanks for the nice comment about my photo in the newsletter, Tom. I took it out this month, I felt sort of like an ego-maniac having it in each month, hi!

From John WD8JOH: Hi Nancy - just got my key-note and what a surprise with the new format. Its great I really like the new setup, I'm sure I'm not the only one that has commented on it. I read it a dozen times and still find stuff I have missed. Keep up the good work and keep the keynote coming.

Hi John, Thanks for letting me know you like the new Keynote format! I think the general consensus is that it's a big hit! I hope the improvements I make over the next few months make it even better - I'm open for suggestions, so if anyone has any thoughts, let me know. As I've said before, I'm not a professional publisher/graphic/editor, so I benefit from you experience!

From Buddy WB4M: On a dismal note, I have been e-mailing a ham in California, who reports that almost all of the members of his club are no-coders, and all they do is bash the CW requirement. He went on to say that there is a large group out there, including ARRL reps who are against the CW requirement, and make a habit out of attacking it. He further told me that an unnamed ARRL official told him that "if you don't like the idea of a no-code HF license, then you better find another hobby", because the CW requirement in all probability will go down the tubes in WARC99. One publisher of a well-known ham radio newspaper expressed his anxiety of the coming no-code HF license. He also said that HRO in Calif. has expanded his business in anticipation of a no-code HF license. I readily admit that I am unable to confirm this short of calling HRO myself, which I doubt that I will do.

Now, on a bright note! I am finding that there are a lot of supporters of keeping the CW requirement out there, they are coming out of the woodwork! I try to encourage them to write or e-mail their ARRL reps and also the FCC about retaining the requirement. As you may have noticed, this has become a personal war for me, hi hi.. I see a no-code HF license a threat to ham radio, and also to the digital subbands. It has already divided the ham community, it just is not a good thing.

I'll be looking forward to the next issue of Key Note, keep up the good work. Oh yes, it was my pleasure to meet you at the Dayton hamfest, but I am sorry that I was unable to return from the USAF museum in time to confront old Len Whats-his-name, hi hi..

## FINAL

The letter from Buddy in News and Views is a perfect example of why you need to SEND IN YOUR VOTE to the ARRL if you live in a district having elections this month. Your vote DOES count. Don't let apathy or despair with the situation keep you from sending in your ballot. The career politicians in office at the ARRL are more concerned with the commercial interests, and making money for the ARRL, than they are with representing us. Replacing them with hams who will stand up for what is best for the future of ham radio is the only way to go! PLEASE VOTE!! This new format for the Keynote, makes me rather limited for space, so I'm sorry if I didn't get your news/views in this month. Maybe next month we'll have to go to 42 pages!! Murphy willing, CU in the Sprint! 73 88 Nancy

## SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF THE DX KEYNOTE

DX and NA NETS  
Sunday QRS 0900 (loc) 3.575 2E0AJS US 0100Z on 14058  
Tues: GC0IPX/P 1930 ON 3.558 (+/-)  
Wed: US Net 0100z on 14058; Thurs: QRS 1900 on 3575. 2E0AJS  
DX 14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins  
Pse keep watch Novice allocations UK Net Controls use GX0IPX/P

### GREETINGS

Hello again people. We are enjoying a summer of mixed blessings as far as both the bands and the weather is concerned. 10m has been active (I am told) on a number of occasions and bringing in some very juicy DX though perusing the few QSL cards which arrived here rather than being directed to Bob, I saw no references to 10m on them but a couple did sport a "21MHz" inscription. There have been a few days recently when the bands were unusable due to the very high noise levels and from here in Darwen, I am talking about 10db above S9 but when the 80m band in particular has been workable, many pleasant rag chews have been enjoyed.

During September I shall be rather QRL with GB0FCW and possibly have little time to spare for the news letter so if it should be delayed somewhat I am sure you will appreciate the reasons.

Nancy made a miscalculation as far as the straight key week was concerned and assumed that it ran from the 1st of the month. This is of course not so. The straight key week has always begun on the first Sunday of the month and terminated at 2359 on the following Saturday. As a consequence, the suggestions that she implanted into the US gang conflict with the event as she has told the radio magazines over there that certain FISTS stations will be calling CQ FISTS SE from 9 to 12 September. The 'SE' reads 'special event' and these stations will be offering a special QSL card to commemorate our 10th anniversary. However, there are many members who are not happy on the straight key so I do not expect that the SE classification will interfere unduly.

To those of you participating in the SK week, may I ask that you call CQ FISTS SK to identify yourself to the hunters but please do not shun non-members who may call in. Occasions like this are great flag wavers and I have personally attracted new members to our ranks by gassing with these guys. There are many folks out there who do not understand what it is all about and even conclude that it is a restricted club. Enlighten 'em.

Thank you for all those kind enquiries re the diabetes. The BSC seems to have stabilised at around 7.5 which (the district nurse tells me) is not a bad figure at all and considering that I have not modified my diet to any great degree and still enjoy my nightly visits to the 'watering hole', am quite happy with it.

Number two Son came to see how I was getting along one evening so I buttonholed him into attending to the cold water reservoir for the hot water system. The level was just below the actual outlet and I woke one morning to find that water had been leaking from

somewhere and had tracked along the shack ceiling, finding it's way out within an inch of the computer. The tank is of the plastic variety and the gland which secures the overflow pipe seems to have been poorly tightened so that water was finding it's way between the tank and the fitting to run down the outside of the copper tubing. Being unable to get into it because of a reluctant shoulder, I resorted to bending the ball arm to reduce the level but that was as much as I could manage. Could have been very expensive. Hi.

It was turned midnight. The sky was clear and it was warm. I spotted a movement out of the corner of my eye but it was Tammys' hackles that caught my attention and I looked in the direction he was gazing where the street lights showed up a pair of green eyes less than 50 yards ahead. I slipped a couple of fingers under his collar for security and hissed "SIT". The vixen clung to the ground near to the fence which separates the cemetery from the road, and with the easy gate I envy so, came towards us and the end of the barrier with a rabbit in her jaws so there were perhaps cubs to feed. Why she chose to cross the road when there was an abundance of bunnies in the cemetery grounds I cannot understand. Perhaps she was labouring under the illusion that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence but this is a human trait also which is perhaps why some people will quit a clear frequency to call CQ on or adjacent to another which is occupied.

### LAST SUNDAY LADDER

Call	Mbrs	M_Tot	Non-M	Prev	Total
G4LHI 15	30	2	390	422	
GW0SGG 10	20	3	356	379	
G0TBD 11	22	0	242	264	
G0MGD 22	44	7	166	217	
G4OOS 10	20	0	200	220	
G0MRH 12	24	1	150	175	
G4PTE 8	16	1	151	168	
G0FVS 6	12	2	134	148	
G4RBE 8	16	1	70	87	
GW4PXQ 11	22	0	47	69	
G0VBH 2	4	0	60	64	
G0WAS 5	10	0	31	41	
G0VC 2	4	0	40	44	
GI4CB 7	14	0	14	28	
G0PEH 2	4	3	10	17	
G0IFX 8	16	0	0	16	
G0ATR 4	8	0	0	8	

Next month will be the final for this first ladder and Gerry has kindly indicated that he is prepared to continue with another 12 month period with the following rule modifications by popular request:

Operating periods: 1400-1530 1900-2030QRG  
80-10 mtrs

QSO Format RST, Name, QTH, Serial/Month/M or N

(579=Joe=Anywhere=01/01/N) or  
(579=Joe=Anywhere=01/01/9999) the number or "N" inserted by the claiming station dependent upon the contact being a member or non-member. Log sheets to be with Gerry by the 2nd Sunday of the following

month. Gerrys' address: GM4BAE, North Brae, Brookfield Cresc, Stranraer, DG9 0HY. All times are local and the change to times was due to a heavy demand by older members.

I must confess some surprise at the popularity of this event which has also caused much additional work for Bob, G0FRL, your QSL manager. This volume of cards has involved us in perhaps a little more expense postage-wise than it would otherwise have been but it is insignificant compared to the average postal costs and is something we should be prepared to bear.

### SAMSON KEYERS

Our recent member, G5BM, is the UK and Commonwealth agent for Samson. Most of his sales have been by recommendation and extend as far as JA, W VE, 9Q5, ZS, ZL, CE and others.

The ETM9C-X3 and the ETM9COG-X3 share the following specifications: Iambic Keyer with dot/dash memories. 6 active plus 12 'banked' messages, 1530 chars total. Messages may call others and contain programmed functions. Input queue to store multiple message activations. Contest serial number (001 to 9999). Digital and linear analog speed control.

Adjustable weight on code elements - 25% to 75%.

Built in adjustable frequency side tone monitor.

Tune function for transmitter adjustment.

Selectable automatic character spacing.

Timed pauses within messages.

Message loop capability for continuous replay.

Messages can allow break-in for paddle-inserted text.

Emulation available for other keyers including Curtis 'A' timing.

Ultra-speed mode allows messages at speeds up to 990 wpm.

Ultra-low power consumption for battery operation.

Full beacon capability. Message Editing capability.

Messages and keyer configuration saved when pwr is lost.

Keyer can compensate for transmitter character clipping.

Dimensions: ETM9C-X3 45x113x160 mm (HWD)

ETM9COG-X3 36x65x108 mm (HWD)

ETM9C-X3 750 gm without batteries

ETM9COG-X3 200 gm w/batteries

SAE/IRC for details to: G5BM, Woodlands View, Birches Lane, Newent, GL18 1DN or phone: 01531-820960

### RFI PROBLEMS SOLVED?

I was delighted to have received the e-mail from Ralph to up-date me on his RFI problems and also give a pointer to others with the same potential problems:

You will recall that I had problems of RFI when working frequencies higher than 7 MHz. After a lot of experiments my mentor and I decided that the problem should be overcome by using a magnetic loop antenna.

We studied all the written material we could find. Realising that home construction was a bit chancy in

a unit of that type, we sourced three units. One is manufactured in Germany and it would have been ideal if it was not for the price, which was double anything available elsewhere.

The other sources were AEA and MFJ. AEA would have been my preference but unfortunately they went out of business last December. Their antenna operations have been taken over by Tempo. But they are not yet involved in making magnetic loops. That left MFJ and I chose their model which covers from 7 MHz to 21 MHz. It took some time to arrive and there were various administrative, constructional and meteorological delays. However a week ago today it was finally erected and wired to go.

It is a bit tricky to tune, but I have more or less mastered it now. The propagation conditions haven't been too great, but I have had a few 20 metre QSOs. My friend Mack JE1CLH gave me 549 and other good reports were 599 from Cliff K6KII in Arcadia CA and 589 from Philip K2PG in West Creek NJ.

So far there have not been any reports of RFI and I am keeping my fingers crossed. The main complainant is overseas on a trip to China, so I won't have a final clearance until after her return.

If anyone hears me, please give me a call. It's great to be back on a "proper" band!

Vy 73 to all, Ralph Sutton, ZL2AOH. Internet Phone: ralph-s@pub1.ipn.vocaltec.com

### NEW MEMBERS

2871 ZS6AJS Joop	2872 G3YSX Stewart
2873 2E1CQL Raymond	2874 G5BN Frank
2875 M0BCZ Roy	2876 MD0ADD Vince
2877 M0ALX Mark	2878 CT1ETT Roger
2879 G4CQI Dennis	2880 IK2WYW Ugo
2881 G3TKX Chris	2882 G0VMK Peter
2283 G0GAQ	Brian

### STRAIGHT KEY WEEK

As usual, this will commence from 0001z on 7 Sept ending at 2359 the following Saturday.

Again, your nominations for FIST of the year will be invited and the lucky station will receive a G4ZPY special with certificates for first, second and third spots. Remember that you have a full 7 days so contest type operating is not necessary. Enjoy yourself and indulge in rag chewing please.

Scoring: Members only, 1 point per contact.

QSO format: RST = NAME = QTH = NUMBER/ (DAY) e.g.

599 = JOE = ANYTOWN = 9999/4 (Wednesday)

Your log, Call, Date, Number, Points together with nomination for Fist of the Year to GM4BAE before the last day in September.

Those of you who cannot use a straight key - oh yes, I know there are several with some disability or other - although you cannot submit a log, may still take part with you electronic keyers to give points.

Remember that if the HF bands are open, there are rich pickings across the pond. Remember also that nominations for Fist of the Year is indeed Fist and not necessarily FIST. In other words, non-members may also be nominated.

Got the following letter to accompany the GB2YD QSL for Yorkshire Day. Seems so unfair really - Lancashire has 365 of 'em.

*"Hi Geo I have just completed the task of posting about 800 QSL cards off to the RSGB Bureau for our last Special Event and about three dozen off to Bob. Thought I would take the opportunity to express our appreciation of the magnificent way in which he organises the FISTS QSL Bureau."*

When we operate a Special Event Station, we always put a CW station on the air and usually have a few dozen FISTS members calling in to say 'Hello' on 80m. As we use a logging programme with the members list included, we 'tag' all the important QSOs so that when the labels are printed we can ship them off to Bob, safe in the knowledge that they will all be delivered within a month. From the startled replies we often receive direct a few days after the next Keynote has gone out, we know that the fast service is both appreciated and unexpected.

*"From my own experience, I worked a couple of dozen members in the USA last month and on contacting them this month was promptly thanked for my cards. What a service - door to door in about 28 days! It has got to be one of the most efficient bureaux in operation. What a bonus members get for their subs."*

Thank you for those kind words Roy which I publish with some trepidation since I risk inflating Bobs' already rampant ego. Hi.

### ODDS N' ENDS

Picked up on the internet:

Arley, Just a note to let you know that I delivered your NTS message to Ed Woodson. Ed is a friend of mine (I sponsored him into FISTS) and he loves CW. Ed thought that the message was great. I'll send a formal NTS reply message to you as well. The great thing about the message was it was an ALL FISTS event.

*"You sent it and GSN (Georgia Slow Net) received it, the NCS who gave it to me was KE4NAY (a FIST) who sent it to me KT4ST (a FIST) for delivery to NC5S (a FIST). I thought that was very cool. And who says CW and traffic handling are dead? Arnie-KT4ST"*

In her NA Memo, Nancy suggests that for the weekend 9-12 Sept, your shack can become a special event station. Call (or answer) CQ FISTS SE and every station you work will be eligible to receive a special Certificate for helping us to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the club. *"We will award a plaque to the member who works most stations that weekend and all participating members will be recognised with a certificate."* Unfortunately, the /SE means nothing over here. You need to run a GB call to be recognised but I am sure it will be a fine flag-waving exercise.

In the same vein, Rick, VE3FMC is operating a S/E station and would like to work as many members as he can.

The station, VE3RLY /SE will be running on 20 and 40m Aug 23/24 under the banner of the RAILWAY CITY DX'ers from the ELGIN COUNTY RAILWAY MUSEUM. The occasion is the Annual Railway

Heritage Days in the Railway Capital of Canada ST.THOMAS.

A contact nets you a certificate suitable for framing.

Note the CALL/SE. this is because neither VE or W offers the same special calls as we enjoy here in the UK so special event stations run the suffix SE to indicate this.

Also from Nancy, We have a new URL for our FISTS page which comes into immediate effect. It is <http://www.FISTS.org>. We hope to phase out the use of the <http://n9nvv.qrp.com/~fists> eventually but during the transition period, both URLs will get visitors to the FISTS page.

Thanks to Lee N9NVV for his help with the new URL, which we believe will enhance FISTS presence on the Internet. Please update your links and information to reflect our new address.

Rod W9BRD (FISTS #1782) and Betty VE3ZBB (#1265) met on 30 meter CW and got married June 27th. I rather lean to Nancy's suspicions that this is our first FISTS wedding but it certainly adds weight to the claim that the club forms many deep and lasting friendships. Hi.

From Ralph, ZL2AOH, a copy of an e-mail sent to W5YI re. the debates and his article in CQ:

*"Dear OM Fred, I usually enjoy reading your column, but was surprised with your July effort."*

*"What you wrote may well be proven correct, but the fact that it was one side of a debate caused me to seek the other side of that same debate. You used your position as a regular columnist to promote only your side of the issue. I am surprised that the editor let you get away with it. Any reputable publication would show balance and then leave it to readers to come to their own conclusion."*

*"I trust that in a subsequent issue you will give the full column to Nancy Kott's contribution to the same debate. That would be the only fair thing to do."*

*"By the way, how is it that when just about every amateur radio organisation worldwide is losing membership, the FISTS club is increasing membership?"*

### R.A.N. SEES THE LIGHT

Robert KB7AQD's friend Steve VK3NF says that the Australian Navy is using CW; not so much with a key but using lights (for silent running). For promotions, they have to take refresher courses which entails sending Morse at 20 WPM and receiving at 15 WPM on the key, just to captain a boat with 10 to 15 people on board... So much for Morse code being obsolete with the Military!!

### SILENT KEY

From Ken, G3ÉCS, news that Bill Beecham G4FMH passed away in his sleep with a brain tumour. Commiserations forwarded to the family on your behalf. Also I sadly learned the other evening from the Darwen Club, Jack, G4GOI who, at the age of 59, succumbed to a heart attack. I knew Jack well, the epitome of the true amateur, he would go well out of his way to help and ran a local RAE class. He will be missed not only by the members but also by his friends in the circle of musicians of which he was a vital pin.

## NOW THERE'S A THING

Nancy, Thank you for your continuing efforts with FISTS. The Newsletter is greatly appreciated! Would suggest to you, that we need a column in the letter entitled "WHAT YOU WONT READ IN CQ" A case in point, I faxed a letter to them in December, that pointed out a basic technical error in one of their articles. They did not even acknowledge my letter or print it. I don't suppose that they want to hear from a professional communications engineer that their king, WIICP has no clothes on! I would be glad to send a copy to you if you would like to publish it.

On another topic: Dave Sumner K1ZZ and I have been corresponding on the need for accountability in their field organization. He has been most cordial, but its going to take a few more years "in the red" for them to see that their own field appointees are killing their membership growth. Also for the record I changed my call from K9ZCH to W9QR. My number is 1474.

One other comment about the CW requirement: Why doesn't anyone point out that anytime a requirement for joining a fraternity is eliminated those who had to fulfill the requirements have a natural tendency to feel that the structure of the fraternity has been compromised. Which of course it has. Is this a difficult concept to understand, or do the W5YT's of the world not care if closed societies (i.e. Licensed) such as amateur radio, open their doors to all for the sake of his wallet.

One other comment, K2EEK who writes the CQ Editorial is a technician class operator. Nuff said, 73, Larry W9QR.

## COMMERICAL CW USE

Bob VA3ROM writes, "CW is not dead commercially. The Canadian Coast Guard still uses it for Arctic operations. Commercial code stations have taken over from the east and west coast Canadian Coast Guard stations and are making money handling CW messages from ships. In the Arctic, satellite is still highly unreliable since the sun blinds satellites in October during the annual solar transit.

Plus HF blackouts, solar flares and storms wreck havoc up there. Also, most ROs on ships in the Canadian Coast Guard are French speaking and we use code by sheer necessity to overcome the language barrier. Same applies to Salties coming into the Port of Churchill. My Russian, Greek and Polish ain't what it shud be. Surprising how many of them can QSO with you using Q-codes and standard short forms, yet are totally incomprehensible on the HF and VHF radio because of accents and English conversational speech."

## ARRL CODE WAIVER PROPOSAL

It has been my experience here in the UK that amateurs object to the ease with which a certain group of cw test applicants get round the problem of sitting the exam with a medical statement. This situation is no different in the US but now, the ARRL has made attempts at addressing this by-passing of the rules.

From Newsline: The Board has proposed changes in the FCC's Volunteer Examiner rules to require that applicants for a ham radio license that requires a demonstrated knowledge of the code, first attempt to pass an accommodated Morse code test before seeking a medical exemption.

"Usually it is easy to find opposition to an ARRL proposal, but not this time. The organized disabled ham community strongly supports the ARRL's effort to close long standing loopholes in the current medical code waiver."

## TOP BAND DX per G4ERZ

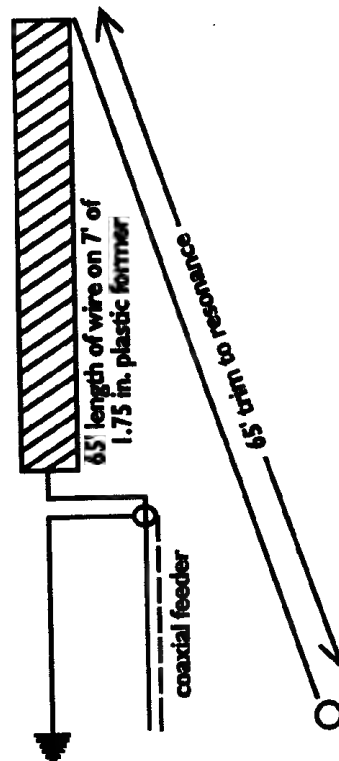
Although he has had QSOs with stations using similar arrangements, Fred, G3TLF, thanks G4ERZ for introducing this economical antenna and also firing up his renewed interest in Top Band DX.

A substantial wire to ground is an advantage (G4ERZ uses his tower) and height above ground is also a factor since it has a bearing on the resonant frequency.

The top of the system hangs happily from a tree branch 45' up and the angle or direction of the sloping element does not seem to affect the low-angle radiation.

UK signals can disappoint because of the longer skip distance.

The band width each side of resonance is about 20KHz and though Fred does not use an ATU, experiment may prove of value.





## THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

**G0TUE.** Ray has acquired a TS530sp and is thus looking forward to a greater degree of activity with his 2nd Century in mind. He is senior novice instructor for Cumbria but also teaches cw "which of course is my first and only love on radio" **G0JRN.** The lad went mad with his colour printer and includes a slip on which, **FISTS MORSE CLUB** is printed in bold display using gradient colour fills. Very psychedelic! **OZ9WZ.** Knud acknowledges a QSO with a letter which shows that he is at the same tender age as my-self (69) and, after 10 years as a R/O in the Danish navy followed by many years at sea in the Merchant Service, retired to reflect upon all this and a number of years spent in the northern district of Greenland close to the ice cap. He clearly does not have my bad habits since he enjoys cycling, but photography together with classical music feature in his interests. **G2HKU.** Ted has been having a 'dabble' on 50MHz but is not too happy since the bulk of the tfc seems to be concerned with 599 and Locator + 73. Yup, I agree Ted, there is little point in including a report if they are all gonna be a dubious 599. Hi. **2E0AMW.** Geoff resorts to printing for the sake of clarity - suspects I would never decypher his handwriting Hi. At 68 years, he aspires to a full licence next year but up to now he has 550 cw and 200 ssb QSOs in the log. **G0ONS.** Hi Jim. An exclusive 80m band is quite a target to aim for but in view of the current trend for VHF/UFH comms systems, over the horizon contacts should represent no problem to the (particularly) Danish fishermen currently blighting 80m with USB. Will try to treat your letter in more depth when we have the space. **G4EIB.** Jim is little miffed with the non-arrival of QSLs from stations to whom a card has been sent. Don't think this applies to FISTS really because close on 100% QSL via Bob but too many stations do not subscribe to a bureau or often enough to not have QSL cards to send but they never mention that in QSO. **K4HXM.** My pleasure Geo and I am sure that most of our UK/EU members are aware of the trend to make amateur tickets available over the counter. It's gonna be a long hard fight. Hi. Geo includes a deep report from the Virginian Pilot newspaper concerning a coming together of the Theodore Roosevelt and Leyt Gulf where cost of questionable communications was more than \$10m.

### Century Award Clarification

Just a quickie note here, since there is a bit of room left...Points for North American members are: FISTS members in the same country as you, are worth one point. FISTS worked from a different country, as determined by DXCC rules, are worth two points. For example, if you are in the US, and work Canada, that contact is worth two points. Club stations are worth three points. The FISTS member has to be a FISTS member AT THE TIME OF YOUR CONTACT. You can only count a FISTS member ONE time. The Golden Century is issued by HQ in England (see page 2). Regular Centurys issued by N9NVV.

## FINALE

Sorry we ran short of space again this month and there were several letters not included in the strawberry basket. I trust that those members will understand. Nancy has gone over to an A5 booklet format for the NA Memo. I have yet to receive a copy but the version which she e-mailed to HQ gives me the impression that it is going to be very smart indeed. Afraid I cannot do the same sort of thing because my printing facilities are restricted to A4 and to produce a booklet of this nature involving folding and stapling would mean shipping out the printing to a professional print shop with a consequent increase in subs.

It is only this fact that has kept EU subs at the same level as 1989 but the chore of editing, printing and preparing the Keynote for despatch is rapidly placing a very high demand on my reduced available time. It may well be that at some period in the future, I shall have to farm the job out and in this case, a format such as that described may well be used. This will also mean an increase in subs which concerns me since many of our members are on a restricted income. Let me know what you think we can do about this and we will discuss the issue when I next call a committee meeting. Next month, with GB0FCW active, the club call, GX0IPX could be ported out. G3GXQ has already earmarked it for the SK week but if any of you would like to run it /P other than during that period then pse give me a bell. Remember that the country designator comes in here (GC0IPX/P) etc.

73/88 for now people. Have fun es stay stober.

Geo

### Late Breaking North American News

A Pro-Code Informational Email list is being put together. This list will be used to keep Pro-Code people informed about the political activities regarding the Morse code requirement, including the activities of No Code International and ORACLE. As far as I know, the list will be managed by Dio KE6WEO. If you want to be included in the circulation, here are the instructions:

The email address for the server is:

**majordomo@sd.inri.com**

To subscribe, send an email to the above address with no subject line. In the body of the message:

**subscribe procode**

If you want to have a different address used as the return address, use this line instead and eliminate the <>:

**subscribe procode <your other address**

## Procedural Signals (Prosigns) for Morse Code

C Q.....Calling any station  
AR..... over, end of message  
K.....go ahead, invite any station to transmit  
KN.....invite a specific station to transmit  
R .....all received OK  
AS..... please stand by  
SK.....end of contact (sent before call)

## Q Signals

Q Signals take the form of a question only when each is followed by a question mark.

**QRG** Will you tell me my exact frequency (or that of \_\_\_)?  
Your exact frequency (or that of \_\_\_) is \_\_\_ kHz.

**QRH** Does my frequency vary?  
Your frequency varies.

**QRI** How is the tone of my transmission?  
The tone of your transmission is \_\_\_. (1. Good 2. Variable 3. Bad)

**QRJ** Are you receiving me badly?  
I can not receive you. Your signals are too weak.

**QRK** What is the intelligibility of my signals (or those of \_\_\_)?  
The intelligibility of your signals (or those of \_\_\_) is:  
(1. Bad 2. Poor 3. Fair 4. Good 5. Excellent)

**QRL** Are you busy? also: Is this frequency in use?  
I am busy (or I am busy with \_\_\_). Please do not interfere.

**QRM** Is my transmission being interfered with?  
Your transmission is being interfered with \_\_\_\_.  
(1. Nil 2. Slightly 3. Moderately 4. Severely 5. Extremely)

**QRN** Are you troubled by static?  
I am troubled by static ---. (1-5 as under QRM)

**QRO** Shall I increase power?  
Increase power.

**QRP** Shall I decrease power?  
Decrease power.

**QRQ** Shall I send faster?  
Send faster \_\_\_\_\_. (WPM)

**QRS** Shall I send more slowly?  
Send more slowly \_\_\_\_\_. (WPM)

**QRT** Shall I stop sending?  
Stop sending.

**QRU** Have you anything for me?  
I have nothing for you.

**QRV** Are you ready?  
I am ready.

**QRW** Shall I inform \_\_\_\_ that you are calling on \_\_\_\_ kHz?  
Please inform \_\_\_\_ that I am calling on \_\_\_\_ kHz.

**QRX** When will you call me again?

- I will call you again at \_\_\_\_ hours (on \_\_\_\_ kHz).
- QRY** What is my turn?  
Your turn is numbered \_\_\_\_.
- QRZ** Who is calling me?  
You are being called by \_\_\_\_ (on \_\_\_\_ kHz).
- QSA** What is the strength of my signals (or those of \_\_\_\_)?  
The strength of you signals (or those of \_\_\_\_) is \_\_\_\_.  
(1. Scarcely perceptible 2. Weak 3. Fairly good 4. Good 5. Very good)
- QSB** Are my signals fading?  
Your signals are fading.
- QSD** Is my keying defective?  
Your keying is defective?
- QSG** Shall I send \_\_\_\_ messages at a time?  
Send \_\_\_\_ messages at a time.
- QSK** Can you hear me in between your signals and if so, can I break in on your transmission?  
I can hear you between my signals; break in on my transmission.
- QSL** Can you acknowledge receipt? Do you copy 100%?  
I am acknowledging receipt. I understand.
- QSM** Shall I repeat the last message I sent you, or some previous message?  
Repeat the last message you sent me [or message(s) number(s) \_\_\_\_].
- QSN** Did you hear me (or \_\_\_\_) on \_\_\_\_ kHz?  
I did hear you (or \_\_\_\_) on \_\_\_\_ kHz.
- QSO** Can you communicate with \_\_\_\_ direct or by relay?  
I can communicate with \_\_\_\_ direct (or by relay through \_\_\_\_).
- QSP** Will you relay to \_\_\_\_?  
I will relay to \_\_\_\_.
- QST** General call proceeding a message addressed to all amateurs
- QSU** Shall I send or reply on this frequency (or on \_\_\_\_ kHz)?  
Send a series of Vs on this frequency (or on \_\_\_\_ kHz).
- QSW** Will you send on this frequency (or on \_\_\_\_ kHz)?  
I am going to send on this frequency (or on \_\_\_\_ kHz).
- QSX** Will you listen to \_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_ kHz?  
I am listening to \_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_ kHz.
- QSY** Shall I change to to transmission on another frequency?  
Change transmission to another frequency (or \_\_\_\_ kHz).
- QSZ** Shall I send each word or group more than once?  
Send each word or group twice (or \_\_\_\_ times).
- QTA** Shall I cancel message number \_\_\_\_?  
Cancel message number \_\_\_\_.
- QTB** Do you agree with my counting of words?  
I do not agree with your counting of words. I will repeat the first letter or digit of each word or group.
- QTC** How many messages have you to send?  
I have \_\_\_\_ messages for you (or for \_\_\_\_).
- QTH** What is your location?  
My location is \_\_\_\_.
- QTR** What is the correct time?  
The correct time is \_\_\_\_.

## TIME CONVERSION CHART



UTC	EDT/AST	CDT/EST	MDT/CST	PDT/MST	PST
0000	8pm	7pm	6pm	5pm	4pm
0100	9pm	8pm	7pm	6pm	5pm
0200	10pm	9pm	8pm	7pm	6pm
0300	11pm	10pm	9pm	8pm	7pm
0400	12pm	11pm	10pm	9pm	8pm
0500	1am	12pm	11pm	10pm	9pm
0600	2am	1am	12pm	11pm	10pm
0700	3am	2am	1am	12pm	11pm
0800	4am	3am	2am	1am	12pm
0900	5am	4am	3am	2am	1am
1000	6am	5am	4am	3am	2am
1100	7am	6am	5am	4am	3am
1200	8am	7am	6am	5am	4am
1300	9am	8am	7am	6am	5am
1400	10am	9am	8am	7am	6am
1500	11am	10am	9am	8am	7am
1600	noon	11am	10am	9am	8am
1700	1pm	noon	11am	10am	9am
1800	2pm	1pm	noon	11am	10am
1900	3pm	2pm	1pm	noon	11am
2000	4pm	3pm	2pm	1pm	noon
2100	5pm	4pm	3pm	2pm	1pm
2200	6pm	5pm	4pm	3pm	2pm
2300	7pm	6pm	5pm	4pm	3pm
2400	8pm	7pm	6pm	5pm	4pm

0000 and 2400 are interchangeable. 2400 is associated with the date of the day ending, 0000 with the day just starting.

There has been some confusion as to UTC or Zulu, and how it relates to local time. I hope this chart helps. Don't forget that the UTC Date changes at 0000Z. So 0001 Z, Friday = 8:01 PM local EDT Thursday.

# FISTS CW Club

October 1997

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
<div>September</div> <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					<div>November</div> <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13		14	15	16	17	18	19		20	21	22	23	24	25		26	27	28	29	30			<sup>1</sup> <b>8:00 PM Slow Rag Chewers Group 3.720</b>	<sup>2</sup> <b>9:00 PM Traffic Net (Slow) 3.682</b>	<sup>3</sup>	<sup>4</sup> <b>CA QSO party 1600Z - 2200Z Oct 5 QSO Party 14.058 2000 Z</b>
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<sup>12</sup> <b>Century Award Net 14.058 2000 Z</b> <b>RSGB 21/28MHz CW Contest 700Z-1900Z</b>	<sup>13</sup>	<sup>14</sup> <b>9:00 PM Traffic Net (Slow) 3.682</b>	<sup>15</sup> <b>8:00 PM Slow Rag Chewers Group 3.720</b>	<sup>16</sup> <b>9:00 PM Traffic Net (Slow) 3.682</b>	<sup>17</sup>	<sup>18</sup> <b>IL QSO party 1800Z-0200 Oct 20 QSO Party 14.058 2000 Z</b>																																																																																				
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See You on the Sprint - It's only four hours long!

FISTS CW CLUB, P.O. Box 47  
Hadley MI 48440-0047

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